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HYMN FOR THE SEASON.

BY ALICE CARY.

Shorter and shorter now the twilight clips
The days, as through the sunset gates they crowd,
And summer from her golden collar slips
And strays through stubble-fields, and moans aloud,

Save when by fits the warmer air deceives,
And, stealing hopeful to some sheltered bower,
She lies on pillows of the yellow leaves,
And tries the old tunes over for an hour.

The wind, whose tender whisper in the May
Set all the young blooms listening thro' th' grove,
Sits rustling in the faded boughs to day
And makes his cold and unsuccessful love.

The rose has taken off her tire of red—
The mullen-stalk its yellow stars has lost,
And the proud meadow-pink hangs down her head
Against earth's chilly bosom, witched with frost.

The robin that was busy all the June,
Before the sun had kissed the topmost bough
Catching our hearts up in his golden tune,
Has given place to the brown cricket now.

The very cock crows lonesomely at morn—
Each flag and fern the shrinking stream divides—
Uneasy cattle low, and lambs forlorn
Creep to their strawy sheds with nettled sides.

Shut up the door: who loves me must not look
Upon the withered world, but haste to bring
His lighted candle, and his story book,
And live with me the poetry of spring.

THE LOST TREASURE;

OR,

THE CHAMPION OF CASTILE.

A TALE OF SPAIN IN THE OLDEN TIME.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

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CHAPTER X.

AN ENCOUNTER IN THE WOOD.

It was evening when Enrique started for the North. Sir Rinaldo de Pedrosa, with a few trusty men-at-arms, bore him company as far as Reynosa, which was reached before daylight. They found an inn which was opened to them, and the whole party gained a few hours of good sleep. When the sun was well up, de Pedrosa and his men started for home, while our hero sent Gomez out after a good servant to accompany them to the cot. One was easily found—one whom both the adventurers knew—and together the three set out for the mountain cot.

The heart of the youthful knight bounded with a joyous thrill as he came in sight of the white walls within which his boyhood and youth had been so happily and profitably spent; though a feeling of sadness succeeded, as he remembered that he should no more meet the kind face which beamed upon him in love for so many long years.

Even as Enrique approached the mountains, his lungs began to expand with new force, and the blood coursed through his veins with something akin to the old vigor. He expanded his chest to receive the pure, bracing air, and half his pains and fatigues were forgotten. Things were soon put to rights in the cot, for Gomez was so far recovered that he could work considerably, and as soon as the knight had got fairly settled down he commenced his exercise, moderately at first, but increasing the labor as his frame grew stronger.

One afternoon, when the sun was near the tops of the western mountains, Enrique and Gomez were riding in the wood between their place and Reynosa. They had been exercising, and the young knight was in full armor. He had regained nearly all his wasted strength; his armor sat lightly upon him, and he could wield his heavy ax with sure aim. Only a month had been spent at the cot, but that month had worked wonders in our hero and his attendant.

"See you that o'erhanging limb, Gomez?" said the knight, pointing to a stout branch which grew out over the path.

"Aye, my master—very plainly."

"Can I cut it off at a full gallop?"

"I think not. It must be a heavy blow, and a sure one, that takes that off."

"Wait. See the trial."

Thus speaking, Enrique drew his ax from its beckets, and gathered up his rein. A word to his horse, and away he flew along the narrow road. His ax gleamed above his head—then it took a quick, graceful curve—and, with a sweeping blow, he struck the mark, as his horse dashed beneath it, the whole limb falling to the earth behind him, cut clean from its parent stock.

"Bravo!" cried Gomez, clapping his hands.

But Enrique did not hear the warm encomiums of his esquire. The limb, in falling, had struck his horse upon the haunch, and the mettlesome animal leaped through a wide opening in the side of the path, dashing on at full speed for some moments. When he stopped it was of his own accord, for he had come upon a scene which he seemed to fancy his master might wish to observe. And Enrique, ere he had fairly recovered from the wonder which the sudden movement of his beast had caused, was startled himself by the same scene.

He had come to an open space in the thick wood, and before him were men, women and horses, both dead and living. He did not stop to count the exact number of either, only he saw two females, and some half-dozen armed men on foot, their horses standing near by. These latter were just in the act of dragging the women from their saddles as Enrique came upon the spot.

"Help! Oh—help!" cried one of the ladies, as the knight dashed in.

THE RESCUE OF THE UNKNOWN LADIES.

His ax was still in his hand, and he stopped not long to consider. It was enough for him that a body of stout men were torturing two unprotected women.

"Now, Lion—on!" spoke Enrique, as he touched the flank of his noble beast with the rowel. "Back!" he shouted, as he swung his trenchant ax aloft. "Back, or you die!"

Four of the ruffians quickly turned and drew their swords. One of them the knight cut down as he swept past, and by the time his ax had been raised again he had wheeled about, and the skull of a second was cleft in twain.

At this moment Gomez appeared upon the scene. He saw his master at work, and he felt safe in following his example, so he drew his heavy sword, and killed one of the two remaining men who opposed the knight.

"Look to this villain!" exclaimed our hero, as he saw that one of the females had been dragged from her saddle.

There were two men engaged in this latter piece of work, and as Gomez turned upon the one his master had left, Enrique wheeled his horse upon the others. One of them he cut down in an instant, and the other left the lady, who was upon the ground, and gave him battle. But it was a battle of but short duration. The fellow had caught up his spear, and endeavored to plunge it into his opponent's horse. He missed his aim, however, for the intelligent beast avoided the thrust of his own accord, and, as he turned, his master's ax descended upon the villain's head, laying a half of it upon each shoulder. In an instant Enrique wheeled about, but his esquire had despatched his man.

The knight now leaped from his saddle, and hastened to where the two females stood, the second one having dismounted, and gone to the assistance of her companion. The oldest of the two, and she who seemed to be the mistress, was a beautiful woman, though in the middle age of life. She was small and symmetrical in frame, with large black eyes, features of perfect mold, a skin as fair as alabaster, and with raven curls floating over her shoulders. Her garb was of a staid, somber hue, and though very plain, yet of fine texture.

The other was some years younger, and though very comely, yet possessing but little of the beauty of her mistress. Her dress was exactly the same as that of her companion.

"Fair lady," spoke the knight, "command me as you will."

The woman started as the voice fell upon her ear, and gazed eagerly up at the closed visor.

"You would see my face," he added, as he noticed the movement, and at the same time he lifted the iron covering.

The lady had watched his movements with a wistful gaze, and as she saw the handsome features fully revealed, she uttered a low cry, and would have sunk to the ground but for the sustaining hand of the knight.

"Lady," he said, sorely puzzled by this movement, but yet not forgetting himself in his surprise, "what means this? Surely you do not fear me."

"Fear thee?" she repeated, turning her large, dark eyes again upon his face. "Oh, no. Thou hast saved me from a fearful death. But tell me," she added, with sudden energy of purpose, "is there not some spark of life left in any of the ruffians who attacked me? Oh! seek out one alive if you can, and draw from him the secret of this most foul affair"

Without waiting to hear more, Enrique turned to where the ground was strewn with the dead.

"See if you can find one living man among these weltering forms, Gomez. I can swear that none of those whom I slew can speak, but there may be one of the others."

"San Jago, my master, you spoke just in time," returned Gomez, who had his sword drawn well back. "I was right on the point of putting an end to this fellow here."

Enrique hurried to the spot and found one of the ruffians—he who had fallen ere he came up—not only alive, but trying to raise himself to a sitting posture. The knight raised him up, and bade Gomez to hold him so.

"Oh! save me! Bind up my wounds! I bleed!—I die!"

"Look ye, sirrah!" responded Enrique, "answer me truly, and your wounds shall not only be bound up, but you shall be well cared for. Tell me why you attacked these ladies."

The man gazed up into his interlocutur's face, and a cry of terror broke from his lips.

"Thou—thou here!" he gasped. "Oh! spare me! I could not help it!"

"Who dost thou take me for?" the youth eagerly asked, for he well knew he had never seen the fellow before.

"Who?" echoed the ruffian, in a husky tone. "Oh—I know thee well. But spare me! Promise that thou wilt not hold me to account for this, and I'll tell thee all!"

Enrique knew full well that there must be some strange delusion in the man's mind, but he dared not stop to fathom it now, for he saw plainly that life was fast ebbing away.

"I swear that thou shalt not be held accountable before any tribunal of earth," he said. "So now tell me all."

"Higher—lift me higher!" the dying man gasped. "There. 'Twas the prince Nunez bade us slay these two women!"

"But why?" asked Enrique, not a little startled by the marvelous coincidence.

"I know not. He came with us as far as the river valley—we rode all the forenoon—then we came in sight of this party, and Don Nunez ordered us to slay them all!"

"And who are the ladies?"

"You mock me," returned the ruffian, gazing up with a vacant stare, but yet with much eagerness upon his bloodless features. "But she is not dead. Oh! curses on the prince! Curses on him! May he never know peace again! His power I dared not question! Curse him! Curse him! Curse——"

A burst of blood from the mouth stopped the man's speech, and while yet he gasped for power to finish his malediction his head drooped, and in a moment more he was dead. The knight caught him and held him up until the light of the eye was all gone, and then he laid him back upon the gory sward.

"Santiago! but this is passing belief!" uttered Gomez, as the dead villain sank back. He gazed after his master as the latter walked away, and then he added, while a peculiar light twinkled in his bluish gray eyes, and his head shook with a startled emotion—

"Aha! Now by San Jago, I begin to see! But silence, Gomez. Gomez Bambillo," he added patting himself upon his breast, "thou must be silent and wise. Oho—I have it! A golden Bermuda to a mark that I am right! Ho, ho, my master, could you but see as I can see! But be wise, Gomez. Gomez Bambillo, be wise. Hold your tongue. You've no business with this secret."

While Gomez had been thus soliloquising his master had approached the females.

"Gentle lady," he said, "I have gained the secret, but ere we converse further may I not offer you the shelter of my humble roof? It is not far distant."

"The very boon I would have craved" she returned

"Have you any wish to express touching the disposition of these bodies?" the knight asked.

"Only that the four who accompanied me may be buried together, where the spot can be easily found, and away from the others. Your man will know them by their garbs. They wear brass cuirasses, while the others wear black ones of iron. I would wish to know where they rest, for they were faithful fellows, and, if I am ever able, which God grant, they shall have a tablet to mark the place of their final rest."

"It shall be done, lady," said Enrique; and as he spoke he assisted her to her saddle, while Gomez, who had just come up, performed the same office for the other.

"Now to horse, Gomez," our hero cried, as he vaulted into his seat. "Let these animals be till we send to bury the bodies. They won't leave their dead masters."

Sir Enrique refrained from asking any questions on the way, though he was racked with curiosity. Yet he often turned his gaze upon the mild, sweet face of his charge, and as often did he find her gaze fixed upon himself. There was something in those pale, beautiful features that awoke strange feelings in his soul, and he felt drawn towards her by a power indescribable and irresistible. It was not a love—not such a love as he had felt before—but a sort of veneration; a deep, pure respect, which sank upon the heart with a holy influence. It was all very strange.

When the cot was reached the females were assisted from their saddles, and Bertrand, the serving-man who had come from Reynosa, led the horses to the stable, while the knight conducted his guests to his living-room.

"We have but humble apartments here, gentle lady; but they are ever open with a warm welcome to the worthy and the distressed. Here," he added, throwing open a door which led to a small sleeping room, "you will find a place where you can be alone, and where no intruder can come."

The lady bowed, and uttered a simple return of thanks.

"You may call me, Floda," she said, with a slight tremor in her tone. "And my attendant's name is Theodora. Now may I know the name of my kind host?"

"Aye, for stain never yet rested upon it. I am Enrique de Moneva."

"Thank you," returned the lady; and thus speaking she turned towards the door, motioning for her maid to follow her.

The last rays of the setting sun rested upon the plain wainscotting of the living-room like a sheen of gold as Enrique entered it after having removed his armor, and put on a garb befitting his station. It was of black velvet, slashed with crimson, and frills, collar, and bosom of the purest linen. His hair, which was parted in the center of his full, high brow, had been suffered to grow long, and now fell in black, glossy ringlets over his neck even to the shoulders. He bowed as he entered, for his fair guests were already there, having performed their toilettes without much state, seeing that all the garments they had with them were those they had worn into the cot.

The lady Floda started half up from her seat as her eyes rested upon the noble form and features of the youthful knight, and an exclamation of some kind had almost dropped from her lips. But she quickly conquered the powerful emotion, and, sinking back, she bowed her head and covered her face with her hands. She remained so a moment only, and when she again looked up all traces of agitation were gone, and she was calm and serene.

Bertrand had prepared supper in an open apartment upon the broad balcony in the rear of the cot, and thither the guests were conducted. The meal passed with but little remark, the old serving-man hovering about most of the time, and the thoughts of both host and guest being too deep and momentous for other ears than those interested.

Finally the knight and the ladies were seated in the large room once more, and Gomez, who had brought in lights, retired, leaving his master a clear field

Again Enrique found the gaze of the beautiful lady fixed earnestly upon him. His heart was beginning to throb most strangely, but he knew not why.

CHAPTER XI.

THE OLD CASKET, AND ITS MYSTERY.

"Now, kind sir," said the lady Floda, recovering from the half dreamy state into which she had fallen while gazing upon the youth, "will you not tell me what you gained from the dying ruffian?"

"Aye, lady," returned Enrique, not quite composed yet. "He said he and his party had been set on by Don Nunez de Castaneda."

"*The prince!*" whispered Floda, in a gasping tone.

"Yes—the prince," pursued Enrique, watching the lady's countenance narrowly. "He said Don Nunez accompanied them as far as the great valley, and there they came in sight of your party. He pointed you out, and commanded them to slay you and your attendants."

"Oh! Heaven have mercy!" the lady ejaculated, turning pale as death, and clasping her hands. "And yet," she added, when she had become more calm, "I had feared it—I had feared something—but not that; oh! not that!"

"But how and where did they attack you?" the knight asked, suppressing other questions which came crowding upon him.

"It was thus," answered lady Floda: "We were riding along through the road when I heard the sound of horsemen behind us, and upon listening I knew there must be several of them; and, moreover, I was sure I could hear the clank of arms. So I wished to turn out of the way, for I cared not to be seen and gazed at, and perhaps questioned, by strangers. Just then we came to an opening in the road upon our right, and I bade my attendants to follow me in, at the same time turning in myself. We had gained the space where you found us when eight armed horsemen came dashing in, and ere we could recover from our surprise two of my men were slain. They then fell upon the other two, whom they succeeded in killing, though not until two of their own number had fallen. Then the ruffians turned upon me, and bade me say my prayers. I asked them if they meant to murder me, and they said, yes. It was just as that answer fell upon my ears that you came up. Oh! God himself sent you to save me!"

Her frame was convulsed by the power of her feelings as she ceased speaking, and Enrique was sure that he saw tears trickle through her fingers as her hands again covered her face. When she looked up her cheeks were wet, but she wiped the moisture away, and then added, in a tone somewhat broken—

"I am very grateful, sir. My great danger—with death so near—and such a terrible death—and your generous, devoted service, move me deeply. But you are sure they were ordered to this by Don Nunez?"

"Yes, lady—I know the prince well," replied our hero, speaking as calmly as he could under the perturbation which had taken possession of his mind. "He is capable of anything. He is a bad man, and a bold one."

"I think you speak truly," Floda said, now grown calm again, save a slight tremulousness about the muscles of the face. "But I had not thought him so base."

"And have you any idea of his reason for wishing you murdered thus?" the knight asked. He spoke very carefully, for he was venturing upon ground of mighty interest to himself.

"He must have wished me out of his way," the lady returned. "But what harm I can do to him, or how affect him, I am unable to conceive."

"You are from Burgos, I presume?" ventured the knight.

"We came from there last, good sir."

"And you knew the prince there?"

"I have seen him," answered the lady, growing more and more calm and reserved as the youth's questions came.

"And for fear of him you were leaving the kingdom?"

"Leaving a part of it."

Enrique fancied this answer meant that he was growing too inquisitive. Yet he did not relinquish his hopes of finding out who his guest was, and what strange connection of circumstances could have bound their fates so nearly together. That there was something he felt assured—something of common interest between himself and the fair lady. Not only did the respective relations in which they stood to the prince lead him to this opinion, but further still was he led by the instinctive yearning of his soul for this woman's confidence and love. He wished to lay his head upon her bosom, and ask her to bless him. As he gazed upon her his whole heart went forth with a new and wondrous worship—not such worship as he could give to the maiden who had his first great love, but such as he would give to something above and beyond him.

"Lady," he at length said, in an earnest tone, "there are many questions I wish to ask you—questions that have to do with deep and heartfelt emotions that you have awakened. Yet I would not annoy you. May I have your permission to proceed?"

Floda turned her head and gazed towards the window near her. There was a perceptible tremor in her slight frame, and one hand was pressed hard upon her bosom. When she looked next upon her host there was a warm glow upon her face, and a half waking smile seemed working about her eyes and lips.

"Gentle sir," she replied, in a tone of calm sweetness, half imploring and half of command, "ask me no questions beneath this roof, nor yet while I am under your protection. A power over which I have no control will prevent my answering. I cannot deny that there seems to be a strange connection in our affairs of life; but I

cannot solve the mystery now—for mystery it is. But we shall surely meet again if we live; and when we do meet, God grant that all of mystery may be dissolved. I know you will grant me the boon I am about to ask: Question me no further concerning myself or my affairs. I ask it because I am bound to silence."

"I hear, and obey," promptly returned the knight. "However much I may wish to penetrate the thick, dark vail that enwraps me like a cloud of night, and hides from me the very things upon which my fate turns, I will not ask you a question against your own free wish. So you may rest easy upon that point."

"I thank you, kind sir—from my heart I thank you," murmured the lady, in a low tone. She was silent a while, and then she resumed, in a more natural manner—

"You have resided here for some time, sir?"

"Since my earliest memory, fair lady, save some weeks which I spent at Burgos the present year."

"Were you born here?"

"Ah," responded Enrique, with a bright smile and a playful shake of the head, "you are turning the storm upon me."

"Pardon, gentle sir. If I am infringing pray do not answer me."

"On the contrary, lady, I should be pleased to give you the whole story of my life. It might interest you."

Floda signified her desire to hear it, and thereupon the youth commenced the recital. He told all he could remember of his childhood, and all he could remember of his earliest association with Fernandez de Moneva. Then he gave an account of his studies, his exercises, and his exploits in the forest, not forgetting his meeting with John of Navarre. Then came the death of Fernandez; the knight's journey to the capital; his meeting with de Velasco, Don Nunez, and the lady Eleanor; the adventure accompanying it; and his whole experience in the city, together with his interview with Alfonso, and his subsequent course in his present quarters.

"And now," he added, "you have my whole life as clearly as I can give it. Have I not reason to be anxious when anything transpires which promises to throw light upon my pathway?"

"Aye, most surely," returned the lady, who had been not only deeply interested in all she had heard, but at times, deeply affected, too. "But tell me," she added, "did not this Fernandez leave anything from which you could gather information?"

"He left nothing but a small box, in which were some relics which he had preserved from his former exploits among the Moors. But he might have told me more than he did had he not been stricken down so suddenly. Speech was denied him save for a very few moments."

"This box—may I see it?" asked Floda, eagerly, though she endeavored to hide the feeling.

"Certainly," said Enrique; and thus speaking he arose and left the room.

When he returned he bore in his hands a box of red cedar, strongly and handsomely bound with silver. The key was in the lock, and as he handed it to the lady she threw back the lid and gazed within it. With a trembling hand she pressed upon a secret spring upon the inside of the cover, and a thin panel, which had before seemed only a part of the solid lid, dropped down, revealing a folded parchment, which had just filled the slight space allowed it. Floda eagerly grasped the document, and with a wild tremor shaking her whole frame, she placed it in her bosom.

"This is mine," she uttered, spasmodically. "You will give it to me, for I should not have found it so readily had I not known where it was. Ask me no questions. Let me keep this, and I will bless you. The time shall come—it must come—when you shall have nothing to ask of me that I will not readily answer."

She let the box rest upon her knees, for she had not the power—or she dared not trust her nerves—to hand it back. She gazed into the youth's face a moment, and then, having laid the box upon the floor, she arose and went to the open window.

Enrique was wonderstricken and puzzled. All the old desire to question his strange guest came back to him with tenfold power, and he would have broken the ice anew had she not turned away. He gazed first upon the open box, with its secret apartment still revealed, and then upon the form at the window. Finally he quelled the turmoil in his bosom, and starting towards the spot where Floda stood, he placed his hand upon her shoulder.

"Lady," he said, in hurried tones, "promise me that the time shall come when all this mystery shall be cleared up, and I will ask you no questions now."

"I promise—promise and bless you, too," she answered, quickly and energetically.

"And where shall I find you?" asked the knight, gazing fondly into the fair features before him.

"I will find you," she replied. "Fear not of that, noble sir. Seas or mountains shall not hide you from me. The time shall come—it may not be far distant—when every cloud of doubt and anxiety shall be rolled away. Trust me—trust me."

"I will trust you," cried the young host, seizing the fair hand, and pressing it to his lips. "There—I'll ask no more."

The lady turned again to the window, and when she left it she bade the youth "good night," and then called upon Theodora to accompany her to their sleeping-room.

When Enrique was left alone he commenced to pace to and fro across the wide apartment, with his arms folded and his head bowed; and this he continued till he was interrupted by the entrance of his esquire.

"Under a cloud, eh?"

Enrique started and looked up.

"What mean you?" he asked.

"I saw you so profoundly buried in something I thought you must be in a cloudy state," returned Gomez, with an honest expression.

"Is't a cloud which you can see through?" the knight asked. "Or, say!" he added, in a hurried whisper, laying hold of his followers arm, and pointing to the door in the corner, "can you tell me who *she* is?"

"I!—tell you who *she* is! No, master. I can tell you nothing that you do not already know. But, who is she? Don't you know?"

"Would to God I did!"

"Ah—the old man's box," exclaimed Gomez, as he saw the cedar casket upon the floor. "You must preserve that."

"Why? Preserve it for what?" asked Enrique, quickly.

"The time may come when you will need it."

"But for what can I need it, Gomez? There's nothing in it but relics of the old man's deeds in arms."

"Ah—there's no knowing what you may find when the time comes," said the esquire, somewhat uneasily.

"Look you," cried the knight, sinking into a chair as he spoke. "Be seated.—There.—Now listen to me: What is the secret of that box?" He spoke sternly, and with authority, and Gomez moved nervously upon his stool. "Tell me, for I must know at once!"

"I cannot tell you, my master," answered the man, beseechingly.

"Cannot?" repeated Enrique, warmly. "You mean, you *will not*, for, by the powers of heaven, I know you hold some knowledge not yet imparted to me. Oh! tell me what you know! What of this box? What did Fernandez ever say to you concerning it?"

"My master, I can only say, keep it safely. If I should die and leave you alone——"

"What, Gomez? What?"

"——Take your axe and break it into pieces, and see what you find! If you love me, cause me not to break my oath!"

"Ah—I see. But listen, Gomez: To-night the lady Floda asked me for this box, and I brought it. She opened it, and directly touched a secret spring which caused the cover to separate in two halves, and from between them she took a folded parchment, which she claimed as her own!"

The esquire seemed surprised for a moment, but he was not moved as his master had looked to see him, for he calmly replied:

"Then it must be hers."

He pondered a few seconds, and then added:

"I knew not where the instrument was, nor did I know that it was parchment; but, since you know so much, I will tell you what I did know. Fernandez bade me see that this box was sacredly kept; and he told you the same, though you thought he only meant that his relics should be preserved. I, however, knew that there was something in there which you might need in time to come—but what that need might be, or how answered, I did not know. The old man only told me that in case anything should happen to prevent him from attending to the matter I should look to it, and see that the box was not lost. But will not the lady tell you? Methinks she is the one to whom you should apply."

"I have applied to her, and she told me I should know all——"

"When?"

"In—in due time;—or—when she could do so," replied Enrique, reluctantly.

"Then why not wait. Are you not willing to trust to that fair lady's honor?"

Gomez spoke almost sternly. At all events, there was much of reproof in his tone; and his master felt it, for he gazed into his esquire's face awhile, and then, extending both his hands, he said:

"Forgive me, Gomez. I will weary you no more. Let the matter rest; and, until it come to me of its own accord, God and this good arm be my protection!"

"Nobly spoken, my master. And now let me report. I have sent Bertrand to Reynosa for men to come early in the morning and meet us at the opening in the wood where we had the fray, then and there to dig ground for the dead ones."

"Right, good Gomez. We will be up betimes. And now—good night."

Enrique sought his bed, and after he had wearied himself over the strange mystery till his head ached, he was content to say his prayers and go to sleep.

And while he was thus occupied the lady Floda was upon her bended knees by the side of her couch. The parchment was in her clasped hands, and tears were falling upon her heaving bosom; and, in the stillness of the night, these words went up from her lips:

"Oh! Great God, I thank thee!"

CHAPTER XII.

BACK TO THE CAPITAL.

On the following morning, ere the sun was up, Enrique and Gomez went out to the place where the fray had occurred, and found Bertrand, with four men from the town, already there. The knight had the bodies of those who had accompanied the ladies laid apart, and then he selected the spot where they should be buried. He bade the men inter these first, and pile up a few stones above them. They might bury the others as they pleased.

After this Gomez was directed to get the horses together, and take them to Reynosa and sell them.

Enrique saw the men well at work, and then he returned and rode back to the cot, where he found the ladies just astir, they having come out to gain a breath of the fresh morning air. Pleasant, friendly salutations were exchanged, and then the knight went in to prepare breakfast with his own hands. A fire was built, and two fine, plump fowls which had been taken the day before, were soon spitted and placed for cooking. The lady Floda came in while her host was thus engaged, and a slight cloud which had rested upon her fair brow was suddenly dissipated as she smilingly offered her assistance.

"I must help you," she said. "I can set out the table and prepare it."

"No, no, lady," quickly responded Enrique. "Go you and take the air, and leave me to get breakfast."

"But I say—no," said Floda, most decidedly. "If I may not prepare the table, let me turn the spit. And these eggs—I can cook these, too. Now you need not say nay—for I am determined." And thus speaking she rolled up her sleeves and gently put the knight away from the fire.

In a little while the two were on the best possible terms, and the cooking and table-setting progressed wondrously. When the meal was all prepared, Enrique and his two guests sat down and did ample justice to the repast.

"Are not the fowls done to suit you?" Floda asked.

"Exactly," answered the knight.

"And the eggs—are they roasted properly?"

"They could not be better."

"I told you I could do it; and by doing it I have gained a good appetite."

Thus they went on chatting until the meal was done, and then the host asked the lady if she would like to ride.

"Yes," she replied. "I should like it well."

"You will spend the day here?"

"I don't know," said Floda, thoughtfully. "After what has happened I think I must return to Burgos."

"Just the thing," cried Enrique. "To-morrow morning I shall set out for the capital myself, and then I can be your escort."

"Why not to-day?"

"Because my esquire has gone to Reynosa with the horses of the dead men, and will not return until noon. And then I must see those who are at work for me making graves. Say to-morrow, fair lady."

"Then to-morrow be it," she responded.

The knight knew not why it was, but still he felt a deep joy when he knew he should have the company of the lady Floda for the day. He hurried away, and soon had the horses at the door; and having seen his guests in their saddles, he leaped upon his own seat, and then led the way across the plain.

At the end of two hours, after riding over the plain, through the wood, and up and down wild mountain paths, Enrique drew up his horse within a deep nook by the crystal stream, and the lady Floda was quickly by his side. She saw a green mound, and upon it a marble slab. Great trees arched overhead, casting a cool shade upon the sacred spot, while the soft murmur of the limpid waters seemed to syllable a ceaseless requiem to the memory of the departed. The woman glided from her saddle, and approached the spot on foot. She bent over the stone, and read:

"FERNANDEZ;

A KNIGHT OF ARRAGON.

His heart knew no guile in life.
His soul can know no pain in death."

When she had read it she sank upon her knees, and bowed her head upon her hands.

"Noble, generous Fernandez!" she murmured, "God rest thy soul! Surely there was no guile in thee, and thy spirit must be at peace! Thy duty was truly, faithfully done!"

When she arose her cheeks were wet with tears, and the quivering of her lips told how deep and heartfelt were her emotions.

"You knew the good man?" said Enrique, reverently.

"I knew him well," she replied. "He was once my best friend. He was truly a GOOD MAN!"

"So he was my best and only friend—my parent, my guardian and my guide," added the knight, with deep feeling. He approached the grave after he had spoken, and knelt upon it. Then he arose, and having assisted Floda to her saddle, he remounted his own beast, and turned slowly from the spot.

Again was the youthful hero sorely tempted. He would have asked some questions concerning the early life of his old friend, but he remembered his promise, and kept his peace. He felt assured that his fair companion would tell him all she wished without his asking, and he waited some time in silence, hoping that she would speak; but the name of the departed friend passed not her lips again during the day, though her manner often told that he occupied a large share of her thoughts.

Gomez returned in season for dinner, having disposed of the horses without difficulty, and at fair prices. Enrique offered to the lady Floda the money which had been received for the four beasts belonging to her party. She took it, counted it over, and then very quietly handed it to Gomez, saying, as she did so—

"Here—when you spend that remember me."

"But," stammered the esquire, gazing first into her face, and then at his master, "I didn't——"

"And I *did*," added Floda. "So take the money as a favor given to me. The horses were not mine—the owners are dead and gone. There—put it in your purse."

"Bless you, fair lady."

"An honest blessing, and I thank you for it," she returned, with a sweet smile.

"Egad!" whispered Gomez, as he gained his master's ear, "she's an angel, too. Did you see her smile?"

"Yes," said the knight, "I've seen her smile several times. And" he added as he turned away, "I wish I knew *who* it was that smiled."

The day passed pleasantly away, and in the evening Gomez was ordered to have everything ready for starting on the following morning.

"I think I am strong enough now," our hero said.

"You are as strong as ever, my master," returned the esquire, promptly.

"So I think; and to-morrow we start."

The morrow came, and towards the middle of the forenoon the horses were brought to the door, and the party were soon in their saddles. Bertrand was left to secure the cot and stable, with directions to keep the keys until called for, and after this Gomez started off to lead the way. When they came to the opening in the wood Floda expressed a desire to see where her attendants had been buried, and Enrique conducted her thither. The grave had been made beneath a large oak, and a small monument of rough stones marked the spot.

"Heaven rest their souls!" ejaculated the lady, as she gazed upon the square mound. "Would that I could have saved them!"

"You should take no part of their death upon yourself, lady," said the knight.

"And yet I cannot but remember that 'twas for me they died," she returned, sadly.

"And how could they have met a more noble death?" quickly responded Enrique, with a touch of enthusiasm.

Floda returned his gaze with a grateful look, but turned away without speaking, for tears were coming to her eyes, and she wished not that he should see them.

When they reached the valley where Bonovento had been slain the knight pointed out the scene of the conflict, and related more fully than he had before done the circumstances attending it.

"And here you saved Nunez de Castaneda's life!" said Floda, with an unusual compression of her lips.

"Yes, lady,—here I saved him and his friends. But I wonder no longer at his strange show of gratitude to me. Since he has attempted your life I regard his attempt upon my own as of little moment in the scale of right and wrong. But I shall meet him!—I shall meet him! and then he may seek new deeds."

"You will be ready and watchful in the battle," said Floda, with much concern. "The prince is accounted the best lance in Castile."

"And he is champion, too?" added Enrique.

"Yes. Thus far he has carried off every palm."

"And he shall now find one that he cannot carry off," cried our hero. "God will protect the right!"

"Amen!" responded the lady; and as she spoke she turned her gaze upon the arching neck of her steed, and became silent and thoughtful.

It was an hour after nightfall when they reached the city, and Enrique, with a royal pass which Alfonso had given him, easily gained access with his companions. When they had entered the town the lady Floda drew up her horse, and requested the knight to do likewise.

"Here we must separate for the present," she said. "Myself and maid can easily and safely find our lodging place, and we will not detain you to accompany us."

"But my duty is not all done till I see you safely to your home," returned Enrique.

"Your duty is to please the lady under your charge," replied Floda; "and you will please her best by not attempting to thwart her. As I said before, we shall meet again; and until then you have my prayers for your best good. Be under no fears. Conquer the prince, and you shall see me ere many days after."

"You will not leave the city?"

"If I do you shall hear from me. Trust me, Sir Enrique—trust me!"

"I will; and if you say I must leave you now, I shall obey."

"It is my wish that you should do so, sir," said the lady, with an evident struggle to appear calm.

"Then good-night—and God keep you!" pronounced Enrique, fervently.

"The same to you, sir, from my very heart!"

Floda spoke thus, and then turned into a narrow street leading to the left, and put her horse to a gallop, her attendant following her example. Enrique gazed after them till they were out of sight, and then turned to his esquire.

"This is a strange affair, Gomez," he said, in a thoughtful mood.

"Of course it is," responded the other. "And perhaps if you wait you may see something more strange yet."

"And I suppose you have some idea of what it is?" the knight returned, rather inquisitively.

"I have no idea of anything about it," said Gomez, almost doggedly.

"Never mind," cried Enrique, more lightly. "If I am to see the light, the light I shall see. And there let it rest. Now whither go we?"

"Why not to the palace? the king bade you report yourself there."

"Right, Gomez,—we will thither at once."

Without further remark they rode on, and ere long drew up at the gates of the royal residence. Enrique showed his passport, and was admitted without further question. When he reached the great door of the palace he gave his horse into the charge of Gomez, and then sent his pass to the king. In the course of half an hour a page waited upon him, and bade him follow. The knight was led through many long passages, and when he stopped it was before a richly carved door which was half hidden by a silken arras. The page passed in, and in a few moments returned and motioned for our hero to enter.

A flood of soft light burst upon Enrique's vision as he stepped into the chamber, and the first object of which he took any note was the king, who was seated upon a sumptuous divan at the upper end of the apartment. The knight advanced to the spot and sank upon his knees.

"Arise, Sir Enrique de Moneva," spoke Alfonso, at the same time leaving his seat and grasping his visitor by the hand as he got up. "By my royal crown, sir knight," he added, as he ran his eyes over the superb frame of the youth before him, "but you have been gaining most wonderfully!"

"Aye, sire—I am as well as ever," Enrique returned, with a slight tremor in his tone, for the royal presence awed him some.

"And are you just from the mountains?" Alfonso asked, resuming his seat.

"I left them this forenoon, sire."

"Be seated, Sir Enrique. This is no state affair, so we can throw off the restraint and form we usually impose."

The knight obeyed, but he was not yet wholly at ease. The king gazed at him so earnestly, and seemed so anxious to read his thoughts, that he was forced to bend his eyes to the floor.

"Now tell me," Alfonso continued: "Are you ready to challenge the prince?"

"Yes, sire," returned Enrique, his eye brightening, and his features assuming their natural tone. "I will challenge him at once. Of course he will not refuse to meet me on the score of his station."

"He dare not do it," said the king, impetuously. "Nor do I think he would wish to do so if he did, for he hold's the champion's lance, and he must meet all knightly challenges. But let him choose as he will, my commands shall be obeyed. He shall meet you!"

Enrique was surprised by the monarch's vehemence, but no more surprised than pleased.

"I do not meet him as the prince," he explained. "I meet him as my accuser, and as a knight."

"Meet him as you please, so you meet him with a pure heart and upright intent," rejoined Alfonso. "And now when will you enter the lists?"

"At any time, sire. When can I confer with the prince?"

"When he shows himself, which I think will be to-morrow. At all events, if he is in the city he shall be here, and here you shall meet him. So you rest upon that.—Pedro!"

The page stepped forward from behind the arras.

"Conduct this gentleman to the chamber he occupied before. Good night, fair sir, and a healthful sleep."

Enrique returned a fitting response, and then followed the boy from the royal presence. When he reached the apartment where he was to stop, and which he found to be the one that he had spent so many sick days in, he asked the page if his esquire could be sent for. Pedro answered in the affirmative, and then withdrew. It was not long before Gomez made his appearance, and the boy, who had come with him, pointed out a small ante-room which he could use if he pleased.

When they were alone Enrique related to his esquire what the king had said, and both master and man were in high hopes. They conversed awhile, and then retired—Gomez to reflect upon the wondrous light he had gained, while Enrique could only ponder and grope in a bewildering maze of doubt and mystery.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

COMFORT FOR HOMELY WOMEN.

In the connubial lottery ugly women possess an advantage to which sufficient importance has not been attached. It is a common observation that husband and wife frequently resemble one another, and many ingenious theorists, attempting to solve the problem by attributing it to sympathy, contemplation of one another's features, congeniality of habits and modes of life, &c., have fallen into the very common error of substituting the cause for the effect. This mutual likeness is the occasion, not the result of marriage. Every man, like Narcissus, becomes enamored of the reflection of himself, only choosing a substance instead of a shadow. His love for any particular woman is self-love at second hand, vanity reflected, compound egotism. When he sees himself in the mirror of a female face, he exclaims, "How intelligent, how amiable, how interesting!—how admirably adapted for a wife!" and forthwith makes his proposals to the personage so expressly and literally calculated to keep him in countenance. The uglier he is, the more need he has of this consolation; he forms a romantic attachment to the "fascinating creature with the snub nose," or the "bewitching girl with the roguish leer," (Anglice—squint,) without once suspecting that he is paying his addresses to himself, and playing the innamorato before a looking-glass. Take self-love from love, and very little remains: it is taking the flame from Hymen's torch and leaving the smoke. The same feeling extends to his progeny: he would rather see them resemble himself, particularly in his defects, than be modeled after the chubbiest Cherubs or Cupids that ever emanated from the studio of Canova. One sometimes encounters a man of most unqualified hideousness, who obviously considers himself an Adonis; and when such a one has to seek a congenial Venus, it is evident that her value will be in the inverse ratio of her charms. Upon this principle ugly women will be converted into belles, perfect frights will become irresistible, and none need despair of conquests if they have but the happiness to be sufficiciently plain.

A WARNING TO WORSHIPERS OF THE IDEAL.

The ancient inhabitants of Amathus, in the island of Cyprus, were the most celebrated statuaries in the world, which they almost exclusively supplied with gods and goddesses. Every one who had a mind to be in the vogue ordered his deity from those fashionable artists; even Jupiter himself was hardly considered orthodox and worship-worthy, unless emanating from the established Pantheon of the Cypriots; and as to Juno, Venus, Minerva, and Diana, it was admitted that they had a peculiar knack in their manufacture, and it need hardly be added that they drove a thriving trade in those popular goddesses. But this monopoly was more favorable to the fortunes than to the happiness of the parties. By constantly straining above humanity and aspiring to the representation of celestial beauty; by fostering the enthusiasm of their imaginations in the pursuit of the *beau ideal*, they acquired a distaste, or at least an indifference, for mortal attractions, and turned up their noses at their fair countrywomen for not being Junos and Minervas. Not one of them equaled the model which had been conjured up in their minds, and not one of them, consequently, would they deign to notice. At the public games, the women were all huddled together, whispering and looking glum, while the men congregated as far from them as possible, discussing the *beau ideal*. Had they been prosing upon politics, you might have sworn it was an English party. Dancing was extinct unless the ladies chose to lead out one another; the priests waxed lank and woe-begone for want of the marriage offerings; Hymen's altar was covered with as many cobwebs as a poor's box; successive moons rose and set without a single honeymoon, and the whole island threatened to become an antinuptial colony of bachelors and old maids.

In this emergency, Pygmalion, the most eminent statuary of the place, falling in love with one of his own works, a figure of Diana, which happened to possess the *beau ideal* in perfection, implored Venus to animate the marble; and she, as is well known to every person conversant with authentic history, immediately granted his request. So far as this couple were concerned, one would have imagined that the evil was remedied; but alas! the remedy was worse than the disease. The model of excellence was now among them, alive and breathing; the men were perfectly mad, beleaguering the house from morn to night to get a peep at her; all other women were treated with positive insult, and of course the whole female population was possessed by all the Furies. Marmorea (such was the name of the animated statue) was no Diana in the flesh, whatever she might have been in the marble; if the scandalous chronicles of those days may be believed, she had more than one favored lover; certain it is that she was the cause of constant feuds and battles in which many lives were lost, and Pymalion himself was at last found murdered in the neighborhood of his own house. The whole island was now on the point of a civil war on account of this philanthropical Helen, when one of her disappointed wooers, in a fit of jealousy, stabbed her to the heart, and immediately after threw himself from a high rock into the sea.

Such is the tragedy which would probably be enacting at the present moment in every country of the world, but for the fortunate circumstance that we have no fixed standard of beauty, real or imaginary, and by a necessary and happy consequence no determinate rule of ugliness. There is no deformity that does not find admirers, and no loveliness that is not deemed defective. Anamaboo, the African prince, received so many attentions from a celebrated belle of London, that in a moment of tenderness, he could not refrain from laying his hand on his heart and exclaiming, "Ah! madam, if Heaven had only made you a negress, you would have been irresistible!"

THE WAY TO LONG LIFE.

The way to long life is, (says an eminent physician,) like to that of everlasting happiness, arduous and difficult. There are many rules that are disagreeable, to be observed; and these even it is useless to observe, unless a person be descended from healthy parents and have brought into the world with him a sound constitution. I will suppose that this is the case; and then the first care of him who desires to attain old age must be, in early youth not to waste or exhaust his energies in any way whatever. With this view he must avoid too severe bodily exertion, by which he will either bring on himself infirmities or premature age. I can never see but with pain, how the common people keep young children to laborious employments to which their strength is inadequate. Young colts are spared and not set to work till they have attained a certain age, when their strength is proportionate to the labor required of them; because their owners know from experience that they are spoiled, and become prematurely old and unserviceable, unless this indulgence be allowed them. It is most unreasonable that we should spare children less than horses; for though they are not so dear as those animals, yet they are of far greater importance to the State; and parents ought not to forget, that their children are part of themselves though existing independently of them, and that it is therefore their duty to be as tender of them as of their own persons.

THE DEATH OF FRIENDS.

There is something very sad in the death of friends. We seem to provide for our own mortality, and to make up our minds to die. We are warned by sickness—fever, and ague, and sleepless nights, and a hundred dull infirmities; but when our *friends* pass away, we lament them as though we had considered them immortal. It is wise—we *suppose*, it is wise that we should attach ourselves to things which are transient; else we should say that 'tis a perilous trust when a man ties his hopes to so frail a thing as woman. They are so gentle, so affectionate, so true in sorrow, so untired and untiring—but the leaf withers not sooner, the tropic lights fade not more abrubtly into darkness. They die and are taken from us; and we weep; and our friends tell us that it is not wise to grieve, for that all which is mortal perisheth. They do not know that

We grieve *the more* because we grieve in vain!

If our grief could bring back the dead, it would be stormy and loud—we should disturb the sunny quiet of day—we should startle the dull night from her repose. But our *hearts* would not grieve as they grieve now, when hope is dead within us.

"ORDER IS HEAVEN'S FIRST LAW."

The gratification which every well-disposed mind derives from the sight of local regularity and symmetry, is so obvious and general, that it scarcely needs illustration. A number of books thrown without order on a table, however common with literary men, is uncomfortable to behold; the same books, ranged in parcels of correspondent position, and especially in directions parallel with the sides of the table, will please the eye; delicious viands placed on a table at random and in disorder, will, even to many an epicure, appear less inviting than inferior dishes ranged in neat and appropriate symmetry.

LITTLE ARTHUR.

BY SALLIE M. BRYAN.

The wind, in pity, breathed a sigh,
And the sweet moon looked from the sky,
To see a blue-eyed baby die.

A hush hung o'er his cradle bed,
Till his young mother shrieked and said:
"My child—my darling—he is dead."

Then oft she kissed his sweet brow's snow,
And smoothed each tiny curl's gold glow,
And murmured:—"Oh, I loved him so!"

But with calm brow and tearless eye,
And lip that did not give one sigh,
His poet-father saw him die.

"I loved this child—how deeply, oh,
God and the angels only know."
He said, with mournful voice and slow.

"But by his lofty-molded brow,
And proud-curved lip—I scarce know how—
Have I been chilled with fear till now

"Ay, in his deep and glorious eyes
There was a calm like that which lies
On Heaven—*before the stars arise.*

"I've dreamed that dimpled hand would sweep
A poet's lyre—that eye would weep—
That sacred lip—pray for dreamless sleep.

"And now, from all its flame had spurned,
The Eternal fire that might have burned
His heart to ashes, is returned.

"My baby-Arthur! I'll repair
To thy sweet grave's love-haunted air,
And plant the rose and myrtle there.

"And when the winds of autumn sweep
At midnight o'er thy place of sleep,
I'll hear their wail—and will not weep.

"Ay, when my spirit might repine,
I'll kneel and thank the Power divine,
That—saved my child from fate like mine!"

THE COUNTERFEITER;

OR,

THE FOURPENCE-HALFPENNY.

A TALE OF CRIME AND AFFECTION.

BY A PRISON CHAPLAIN.

There was a clanking of chains within the cell as the turnkey opened the door to me. I had come to prepare the mind of the doomed to meet death on the morrow.

"Shall I lock you in with him, or wait?" asked the turnkey, as he stood holding the half-opened, massive door, which was as thick as a family Bible, and all battened with iron bars, and studded with the heads of enormous nails, while the locks—there were two—were a foot square, and of vast strength.

The only light which entered the cell passed through a barred lattice in the door, a few inches square. In the rear, high up, was a crevice for air, but it opened only into the ventilator. The cell was seven feet long, six and a half high, and three feet wide. There was a cot bed in it two feet wide, and, save one foot space, as long as the cell. It was a tomb for a living man, in which he was buried before he was dead.

It was a pleasant Thursday afternoon. All was sunshine and life without. It was a few moments before my eyes became accustomed to the gloom.

"Lock me in," I had replied; "I shall be here half an hour, and your services may be elsewhere needed."

The turnkey shoved the enormous bolts, double locking the cell, and I heard his retreating footsteps.

Upon the side of the cot sat a pale young man, with wild eyes and a fixed, resolute compressure of the lips. He was heavily chained by the ankles to a ring in the floor. There were manacles upon his wrists as large as ox-chains, for he had twice broken prison, and was known to be a desperate man.

"You sent for me, Cullingham," I said, quietly, as I laid my hand mildly and kindly upon his wrists, as his hands lay upon his knees, grasping them. "I have come at your request. I am pleased that, after refusing the consolations of religion, you have voluntarily asked for them."

"Religion is of no use to me now, sir. I am too far gone in the devil's way ever to hope to get to Heaven. I've been religious once, but that's past. There is no more repentance for me, and I haven't time to repent, as I am to be hanged to-morrow forenoon."

"Why did you send for me?" I asked.

"To talk with you. I am in horrors when alone. You can do me as much good by staying with me as by trying to convert me, which will be of no use. Besides, sir, I wish to tell you how I came to be here. I wish to unburden my mind to some human being before I leave the world, but mainly I wish to show my wife's innocence. I wish you to hear my story, and when I am dead, let the world know her innocence of that crime. Sit down, sir, and listen to me awhile. *Her* memory must be cleared."

I yielded to his request, and took a seat on the side of the cot with him, resolving, after he should have done, to bring to bear upon him the offers of God's mercy through the cross, even to the chiefest criminals.

"You know, sir, that my father was a man in good circumstances for a country merchant. He was not religious, but a moral man, and brought me up in the fear of God as well as he could. I was fifteen years old when, one day, my father's clerk, in going out of the counting room with some money, accidentally left a fourpence-halfpenny on the desk. At the sight, I felt a covetous desire to possess it. My conscience told me it was wrong. I had never taken anything not belonging to me. This temptation was great because I had been all day wishing to ask my father for just this sum to buy a top (all the boys had tops), and was afraid to, as he was very close, and seldom gave me any money. I let it lay for ten minutes, and as the clerk did not come back, I stifled my conscience, and slipped it off upon the floor, and covered it with a piece of paper with my foot, thus leaving a loop-hole for escape should it be missed.

"An hour elapsed, and the clerk having come and gone several times, I watched my opportunity, and, with a burning face, raised it, and concealing it in my shut hand, thrust the hand into my pocket, and went whistling and blushing out of doors. Sir, that first theft placed me here. In exchange for that piece of silver, behold these heavy chains of iron on my hands and feet. In *this hand* I secreted the money. See the hand now, locked in bolts of iron. Ah, sir, warn the young lad against the first theft!

"This successful pilfering tempted me again. The clerk slept in the same room with me. When he went to bed one night, I heard money rattle in his trowsers pocket as he flung them off upon the floor. The idea that I might take a ninepence, and that it would never be missed, took possession of me. It was, however, not until I had thought it over for three nights, that I resolved and dared to attempt it. He was a heavy sleeper. I crept out of bed and along the floor, and put my hand, unseen by any but God's great eye, into his pocket. I felt noiselessly for a ninepence, but there was nothing less than a quarter of a dollar. I hesitated, and was startled at the idea of taking so much, and fearful he might miss it, careless as he was of change; but the devil urged me on, and I took it. I hid it under a corner of the rug, so that if he missed and looked for it, it might easily be found, and be supposed to have rolled out. He did not miss it, and hence my courage to take, at another time, half a dollar. Ah, sir, that fourpence-halfpenny! That was the minny-hook which the devil baited to catch my soul with!

"In the course of two months I had abstracted from his pocket, in bits, at least six dollars, and from my *father's* nine dollars; for my success with the clerk's change tempted me to try my father's pockets by stealing into his bed room when he was asleep.

"As few men seldom count their loose pocket-money, of these pilferings (at no one time over a half a dollar, and usually in much less pieces) I was, unfortunately, not detected, for if I had been, it might have checked my career in time.

Five months after I had commenced this petty thieving, silencing my conscience with the smallness of the sums taken, and that it was mostly my father's money, (forgetting that it is as great guilt to steal from a father as from a stranger, if not actually *more* wicked,) my father left to go on a collecting tour, and the clerk being sick, I was desired to remain in the counting-room to give answers to people who came on business. I also took the letters from the post-office. In looking these over, I saw one of them evidently had bills. I was satisfied of this by holding it up to the light, and seeing the vignette through the thin letter paper.

"Here now, sir, was a temptation, and one I never should have had, nor the devil have dared to have presented to me, but for that first fourpence-halfpenny.

"'No,' said I to the devil; 'no. These are bills. That is too much. I dare not think of such a thing.' So I put the letter firmly aside.

"But a dozen times in the day the temptation came back upon me. That night I could not sleep till late, for thinking of it.

"I finally went to sleep, resolving I would just open the letter, and see how much was in it. I could seal it again. It would do no harm. There was no danger of my taking a bill.

"The letter was from a country town—the handwriting that of an illiterate person. It was sealed in the old-fashioned way with a wafer. I locked the counting-room door, guarded against being overlooked, and then softened the wafer on my tongue. I opened the unresisting seal with fear and trembling. It was from a customer, who had owed my father three years, and was now only able to send him twenty-five dollars. The money was in a five, a three, four twos, and the rest one dollar bills. I looked wistfully at the bills, but folded the letter up, and put it away with the money in it. I did not reseal it, sir, and thus I voluntarily left the devil's door open. That evening a boy told me there was to be a training in the next town the next day, and asked me to go halves with him to hire a gig. I was ashamed to say I had no money. I wished to go. I thought of the twenty-five dollars, and said 'yes,' inwardly resolved to abstract a one dollar bill only, and replace it in some way (perhaps I intended to do it from the clerk's pockets at night) before my father came back. I took the bill, sir.

"But why need I detain you here, sir? but it relieves me to tell you this. These were my first steps, sir, into guilt. My father did not return for two weeks. Before that the whole twenty-five dollars had been taken away by me, beginning at the smallest bill, and, as I grew bolder, ending at the large one. I spent it in riding, suppers and dissipation. I now dreaded to meet my father. It would never do to give him the letter. So I destroyed it, sir. I resolved to be quiet, and that the writer would suppose it had been lost in the mail.

"Well, three weeks after my father's return, he asked me if I had received such a letter. I was nearly choked with terror, but relieved myself with a lie. I said such a letter had never come that I knew.

"But lies, like murders, will out. The postmaster, in reply to an inquiry from my father, said firmly he had received and delivered such a letter to me. My father then accused me of the theft. I confessed it, and, to escape the punishment which he prepared for me, I fled from his presence. I got on board a sloop going down the river, and reached the city of B——. There I shipped before the mast, and went on a foreign voyage. But the spirit of theft was in me. I stole the captain's gold, was arrested and tried on the return voyage, and thrown into prison. I escaped and became a burglar, and joined myself with counterfeiters. Ah, sir, that little six and a quarter cent piece bore evil fruit after being planted in my pocket.

"Now, sir, not to be tedious, I will come to the present affair. As a counterfeiter I had plenty of money, dressed well, and was regarded in a town where I opened a cigar-shop as a respectable, well-to-do young man. I won the heart there of Charlotte Foley, the daughter of an academy preceptor. She was, as you know, sir, for you have seen her, beautiful and amiable. I loved her as passionately as she loved me! I had been married five months and she suspected nothing wrong, although I was then one of the leading men of a gang of twenty-four counterfeiters. At length I was betrayed by one of the young men of the gang who had a passion for my wife, and wished to get me out of the way! Yes, sir, that was the motive of Kendall Morton's informing upon me! But he has had his reward! This hand sent the bullet to his brain which has avenged me! You know, sir, how I was arrested after having killed two of the officers, and that I was sentenced to death—on my trial! That six and-a-quarter cents, sir, has thus been the death of three men, to say no more of what came after!

"Well, when Charlotte knew that she had been married to a counterfeiter she did not give me up, as some would have done! She clung to me! She strove to see me in prison; but at the request of her angry father, she was forbidden to visit me as I lay under sentence of death. But man had no power to stop her affection for me! She sought the governor! She implored forgiveness for me! She entreated for commutation of my sentence to imprisonment for life! When he refused, she rested not until she had got hundreds of signatures to a petition to him. She achieved her affectionate purpose. I was removed from this very condemned cell where I now am once more sentenced to die, to the Penitentiary! Now, sir, comes the bitterest cup I have drank!

"A wicked one told my poor young wife, when she was again denied seeing me, that if she would commit a small crime of some sort that would send her to the Penitentiary, she might be with me and share my cell! He who told this was that devil Morton; for, finding that she was faithful and true to me, and despised him and his arts, he laid this trap to ruin her forever by making a convict of her! He took advantage of her simplicity and her deep love for me, aware that she would do anything to be re-united with me! Ah, sir, I was not worthy of such a creature! Well, she stole the first thing she could lay her hands on. It was the watch of a lawyer's wife who lived near her. The lawyer appeared against her! She confessed her guilt, as you know! but not the motive! This I now tell you, sir, that the world may know it. She was sent to the Penitentiary one year! But was she put into my cell? Did I see her? Ah, sir, you know how it was."

Here he groaned heavily and buried his face in his hands! For some time he remained silent and evidently overcome with terrible emotions.

He said rightly that I knew how it was. I will tell the reader. The theft which the beautiful and unhappy counterfeiter's wife had committed created great surprise. Her trial created a great deal of interest and of sympathy for her. But as the watch was found on her person and she confessed the theft, the law had to take its course. Who present read her heart? Who there suspected that she had committed a crime in hopes to rejoin her criminal husband in his cell? What marvelous affection for an unworthy object! What depth of love to sin for the sake of the loved one himself a sinner! When she was taken to the Penitentiary, she was smiling and happy all the way. The warden placed her at once in the woman's ward. She had no sooner had her long hair severed from her head and been clad in the blue prison gown, than she asked the keeper eagerly:

"Where is my husband? I must be taken to him! Where is Henry?"

"You can't see him, ma'am, here! You may be here a year and he wouldn't know it!"

"What, shall I not see my husband here?" she repeated. "They told me so?"

"They lied, then," answered the man, roughly, as he locked the door and went out. There were several convict women present. She turned to them. They assured her she would not see him at all!

One of the women has told me the scene that followed:—"When she was convinced of it she began to tear her hair and shriek, and beat the bars, and call on 'Henry! Henry! Your Charlotte is here! Come to me—for they will not let me come to you!' She shrieked and raved until the keepers had to confine her! All that night and the next day she did nothing but shriek and call her husband, till she fainted away as one dead! When they brought her to, she took on again so dreadfully and pitifully that the prison doctor said she would go mad, and must see her husband!"

So far the convict woman.

The rules of the prison were then relaxed, and the prisoner was sent for. He had heard her shrieks across the yard and recognized her voice. When he came in, in chains put upon him for precaution, she was crouched in the ashes of the open fire-place, (it was summer and no fire in it,) and rocking herself to and fro and singing a low plaint. As soon as she heard his voice she shrieked his name, and rising leaped into his arms!

The husband was overcome. His frame shook! The sight of her unmanned him, while this proof of her love melted his soul. For a few moments he held her in his manacled arms close to his heart. Then he tried to disengage her to look in her face. But she clung to him with the phrensy of despair.

"No—no—no! I will never, never leave my husband. God joined us together—let no man put us asunder!"

"Go! Leave us a few moments together," he said, hoarsely.

The men went out, locking them in, only a deaf and dumb woman being left in the room.

After about ten minutes there was heard a wild shriek. They opened the door, and lo! the young wife lay upon the floor—a corpse. A wound upon her temple showed that she had been slain by a blow; and blood on the bar which united his wrists showed that he was the author of her death!

He did not resist those who secured him. He made no explanation. He was silent before the court, and only smiled grimly when he received sentence of death.

Up to the evening before the day set for his execution he had refused to see me. My surprise and gratification, therefore, were great when the messenger came whose summons I now obeyed.

I will now resume Cullingham's own narrative, which, after several minutes' silence, his face hidden in his hands, he thus resumed:

"Yes—you know I killed her! but you don't know why. She told me in the brief space that we were left together *why* she had stolen the watch. Sir—it nearly killed me to be so loved! She then wanted to know if we could never meet again. I assured her, sadly, that it was all in vain for her to hope.

"'Then please kill me now, Henry! I am going crazy! If they take you from me I shall go mad! Oh! kill me now—I am so unhappy. Let me die now if we can never be together, for I can look down from Heaven, if God forgives me, and see you then. I talk crazed, don't I? Please to kill me, Henry.'

"So she talked, sir, to me. I could see her eyes were wild and crazed. I was put beside myself by her misery. I pressed her to my heart, kissed her lips, struck her one blow upon the temple, and she lay at my feet dead! Now, sir, you know all—all! To-morrow I die!"

Here he was silent and thoughtful. He then laughed hollowly, and said—

"If your Bible is true I shall never see her again, for she is innocent and in Heaven. But, sir, my heart tells me she is near me. Last night I saw her plainly in my cell here—a bright, glorious spirit! Sir, she will follow my spirit into hell!"

"Young man, this language is unbecoming," I said. "Would you wish to drag her from the shades of light with you, who have rendered her life here so wretched!"

"God forbid! No, sir. I could bear the tortures of the damned if I believed Charlotte was happy in Paradise. You are taking out your prayer-book—it is no use, sir! Prayers will do me no good. I have no heart to repent—no time in the sixteen hours left me to make my peace for my life-time sins!"

"'While the lamp holds out out to burn
The vilest sinner may return,'"

I repeated, as these lines caught my eyes in a hymn-book which some one had given him.

"No, no! Burn my lamp with the devil's oil all my life, and at the eleventh hour, when the oil is gone, blow the smoke in the Lord's face! I'm no hypocrite, sir. I thank you for coming to see me, and especially for listening to me. I hope you will clear Charlotte's character."

"I promise to report what you have stated."

"It is all true. Now, sir, if you will stay with me, or send some one to do so—I can't bear to be alone."

I informed him it was out of my power to remain; and as he spurned prayer and counsel, I must leave him to the mercy of God.

He made no reply. The turnkey now came and released me, and with a sad heart I took leave of the hardened criminal.

As the heavy door was closing upon him, he called out—

"Tell the boys in your school, sir, about the fourpence-halfpenny, and what iron fruit such stolen silver seed will yield in the end!" and as he spoke he shook his manacles and fetters till they rung again.

The next day he suffered the full penalty of the law, dying without fear and without repentance, leaving in his fate a warning to all who yield to temptation in trifles—shutting their eyes to the fact that a gimlet hole will sink a ship as surely as one made with an auger, give it time.

GIVING ADVICE.

The disposition, impulse, instinct, propensity, or what you will, towards giving advice, is so universal among men, that, with the sole exception of those who *sell* it, no class in the community is exempt from the failing. *They*, indeed, who live by the trade, are cautious enough how they scatter their pearls to swine. The doctor, who, to the traveling question of "what would you advise me to take?" answered, "Take advice," is the type and model of the whole tribe. Law and physic are equally sententious and oracular, and they both hem in their assertions with such phalanxes of "ifs" and "buts," as seldom fail to leave the consultor in greater doubt than before. Yet, strange to say, this bought advice is almost the only species that is implicitly followed. So much, indeed, does the virtue of all counsel lie in the fee, that the best opinion is held to be useless if gratuitously imparted, no man esteeming that worth having which another does not hesitate to part withal. Some may be inclined to attribute the universality of advising to its facility; for certainly nothing is easier than for a looker-on, who proverbially sees most of the game, to pick holes in its playing, and for those who are out of a scrape, and feel none of its embarrassments, to say, "if I were you," or "in your case," or "how can you be so silly!" And the proof is in the number of those who "are forever prone to teach their grannies to suck eggs."

It seems, however, not altogether improbable that the eagerness for giving advice may arise, in no inconsiderable degree, from a fixed conviction that it will never be taken; for it is never so earnestly pressed as when the giver is "certain sure" that it is absolutely impracticable. For this hypothesis many good reasons might be assigned, but we will confine ourselves to this one—that the rejection of advice is the best pretext for abandoning a friend in his adversity, and that there is no better answer to that most impertinent and provoking "Lend me a hundred dollars," than "No, sir, if you had taken my advice," or "It's all your own affair," or "You know you would have your own way;" "As you brew, so you may bake," which are all unanswerable formulæ, intrenched passes, through which the enemy can never penetrate to your pocket.

THE TOOTH-ACHE.

Of all the complaints incident to the human frame, the tooth-ache is one of the most painful. There are people enough who would willingly give large sums to any one who should discover a speedy and certain cure for it. How frequently you hear this observation with reference to other painful complaints; but those who make use of it know not what they are talking about.

Tooth-ache is a species of disease of which there are many varieties. To talk of a specific for tooth ache is, in reality, just as absurd as to desire a specific for all the diseases of infants—a specific for a multitude of evils, which are comprehended, indeed, under one general name, but the causes and natures of which are not only very different from, but frequently quite contrary to, one another. So little, then, as we can expect to discover a medicine that shall deserve the appellation of a universal specific for all diseases, because many of them require totally different treatment, so little can we build upon an infallible remedy for tooth-ache. Hence it is that some medicines, which in certain cases have removed the tooth-ache, have in others either done no good, or perhaps aggravated the complaint; and that a universal remedy for tooth-ache is as grossly absurd as all other universal remedies without exception.

When tooth-ache lasts long, and is violent, it has no small influence on a person's general health. It may be attended with sleepless nights, high fever, delirium, ulcers, tumors, caries of the bones, convulsions, swoons, and other distressing symptoms. The most common kinds of tooth-ache proceed from the following causes: 1. From hollow teeth; 2. from inflammation of the nervous membrane that covers the teeth and spreads into the gums; 3. from a cold catarrhal humor that settles upon the nerves of the teeth; 4. from a general acrimony of the juices, either scorbutic or of some other kind; 5. from a gouty or rheumatic affection; 6. from dentition in children. Sometimes there is a concurrence of the causes of the different kinds of tooth-ache, and in these cases there is greater latitude in the choice of remedies.

LIFE—DEATH.

There dwelt in ancient times on the Palus Mæotis, a barbarous people, called the Alani, whose god was a naked sword, which they set up in the ground and worshiped, and whose greatest glory and happiness consisted in slaughtering their fellow-creatures, and employing their skins for horse-covers. This brutal nation was, as far as we can recollect, the only one that considered it ignominious to die of old age. This maxim, nevertheless, seems to have identified itself with the character of martial nations, the members of which are anxious to die for their country; and it may be viewed in a milder light where it loses all that is rude and barbarous, and appears in the rank of real heroic virtue. It is truly absurd to regard natural death, that is to say, the only way in which men can die of old age, as ignominious: but still it is a real virtue to sacrifice one's life for the public weal; a virtue in which the ancient heroes and philosophers were great, and in which those of modern times are mostly very little. The more effeminate and luxurious a nation becomes, and the more it is depraved by indulgence and voluptuousness, so much the more it dreads death and is attached to life. In vain would you show the debauchee the lustre of immortality that must surround his name, if he sacrifice his life for his fellow-citizens and his country. To no purpose would you promise him the pure joys of heaven, and the everlasting glories on which his soul will feast itself. He would rather be utterly forgotten from the present moment, and renounce a future state altogether, than give up a single year of his voluptuous life. Between these two extremes the wise will choose a middle course. We must not hold life so lightly as to throw it away, neither ought death to appear so terrible as to make us hesitate to surrender it, when important occasions demand the sacrifice.

SHARKS AND SHARK-PIES

Sharks must be much more numerous in our waters than we commonly suppose, at least at some seasons of the year, if we may judge from the numbers captured by those who know where and how to fish for them. The most common modes of taking them at sea are with a large hook, or a harpoon or "*grains*," (which is thrown like a harpoon, but is differently formed at the point.) Sailors will often exert themselves to the utmost, to get sharks into their power, chiefly from an antipathy to the ferocious fish, or from the love of sport. It is true that a small part of a shark (the tail) is often cooked and eaten, when other fresh meat is not to be had; but it is not a great favorite, even with the sailors themselves.

In some cases sharks are allowed to live after being taken, but are treated in a barbarous manner, being thrown again in the water, to afford a cruel sport to their captors. A hole is cut into the fish's head, into which a small piece of board is driven at an angle inclined forward. The effect of this is, as soon as he begins to swim to incline his course upward, and bring him to the surface. Thus he is unable to pursue his way deep into the sea, as he is disposed; and finds himself frequently rising, against his will. Now and then, as if enraged at being thwarted in his wishes, and resolved to overcome the difficulty, he starts off with all his force; but this only makes matters worse, as he throws himself out of water, sometimes to a distance. This is the object which his persecutors have in view, and which affords them inhuman amusement.

In some parts of Narragansett Bay sharks are remarkably numerous, at least they are caught there to a great extent, and are used to manure the land.

"A gentleman, who has a farm on the shore of that bay," said a friend, who had been visiting that part of Rhode Island, "invited me one morning to walk with him to the water, and witness a cast of his net. I found arrangements made for taking fish of much larger size than shad: for the net was made of thick and very strong cord, with broad meshes; and I soon found that it had been cast with skill; for, as the men drew it towards the land, they met with powerful resistance. One enormous fish soon exposed itself partly to view, then another and another; and, after much time and labor spent in securing them, several large sharks were safely landed. The net was cast again; and, by breakfast-time, nine were collected in a place on the shore, from which there was no danger of their finding their way back to the water. After breakfast," said my friend, "if you choose, you may learn how to make a *shark*-pie. We returned, after our meal; and I found the men had been digging a hole in the ground, into which they soon threw all the fish, shoveling in the loose earth in considerable quantities between them. I now understood the nature of the dish which they were preparing."

Thus they dispose of the sharks which they capture in that neighborhood, in order to prepare from them a manure to spread over the land. The flesh, when putrefied, with the oil which it contains in abundance, forms, with a due proportion of earth, a very rich and durable manure; which, when applied with judgment, greatly improves the crops. It is indeed an unpleasant process, and the air is often infected by the offensive exhalations, for a considerable distance around. But, as with white-fish, which are used along the coast of Connecticut, for the same purpose, the inhabitants, by habit, become surprisingly insensible to what often appears to strangers utterly intolerable.

T. D.

"THE TESTIMONY OF THE ROCKS."

Late travelers amid the rocky solitudes of the deserts of Asia have brought accounts of strange, fragmentary inscriptions upon the rugged hights of Sinai. They asserted that thousands of inscriptions had been found, and that many of them were made upon spots reached only with the utmost difficulty, showing that whoever made them must have had the help of ladders and platforms, and have made long stops in the desert.

Some English travelers who penetrated to that lone and dreary region, copied a number of these inscriptions and brought them home. But it was in vain that attempts were made to decipher them—all was darkness with regard to them. The tribes in the neighborhood of Sinai could give no account of them.

At length, after a great deal of study and research, some learned and shrewd men succeeded in making a key out of several different and very old languages, and with this key they once more essayed to read "the testimony of the rocks."

With astonishment, awe, and delight, they read as follows:—

"The hard rock water—a great miracle."

"The people, the hard stone satiates with water, thirsting."

"Destroy, springing on the people, the fiery serpents. Hissing, injecting venom, heralds of death, they kill. The people prostrating on their back, curling in folds, they wind round, descending on, bearing destruction."

"The people sustain on a pole, erecting a standard, the male serpent fiery of molten brass."

Very disconnected are the sentences, but let any one compare them with the sacred scriptures, particularly with the twenty-first chapter of Numbers, and see if he does not think those hoary rocks, silent for ages, are now speaking effectually in the ears of men of the truth of the Bible record.

God is, indeed, able to raise up from the very stones witnesses to the truth of all that His written word has told us. While the infidel derides the sacred volume, the believer clasps it firmer and firmer, for he *knows* that its words are spirit and life, and that both Heaven and earth conspire to prove its origin divine.

C. S.

BEWARE.

Girls! when you see a man with big whiskers, moustache, gold-headed cane, showy jewelry, and dressed to match, and when this person talks largely about his sugar plantation in Louisiana, and his desire to find a wife who has been brought up at the North, his tender conscience not permitting him to choose a Southern lady—then, girls, stand as far off as possible if he is under the necessity of introducing himself. The chances are five hundred to one that the fellow is a gambler and land pirate, living by his wits on other people's funds. We say again to all romantic girls, beware of the baits which such fellows throw out, or you will repent at your leisure.

ENVY.—Stick up your noses, girls; Amelia has got a new bonnet. A poor girl has no business to dress tidily, and no business to be good looking. *You* haven't a new bonnet—*you* are not good looking; so, up with your noses and have satisfaction by "making faces." How becoming it is to have malice and envy pictured on the face of a girl! How impressive and effective it is! So—up with your noses, girls; Amelia's got a new bonnet.

NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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LOST BOOKS.

Numerous as they are, what are the books preserved in comparison with those that we have lost? The dead races of mankind scarcely outnumber the existing generation more prodigiously than do the books that have perished exceed those that remain to us. Men are naturally scribblers, and there has probably prevailed, in all ages since the invention of letters, a much more extensive literature than is dreamt of in our philosophy. Osymandias, the ancient King of Egypt, if Herodotus may be credited, built a library in his palace, over the door of which was the well-known inscription—"Physic for the Soul." Job wishes that his adversary had written a book, probably for the consolation of cutting it up in some Quarterly or Jerusalem Review; the expression, at all events, indicates a greater activity "in the Trade" than we are apt to ascribe to those primitive times. Allusion is also made in the Scriptures to the library of the Kings of Persia, as well as to one built by Nehemiah. Ptolomy Philadelphus had a collection of 700,000 volumes destroyed by Cæsar's soldiers; and the Alexandrian Library, burnt by the Caliph Omar, contained 400,000 manuscripts. What a combustion of congregated brains:—the quintessence of ages—the wisdom of the world—all simultaneously converted into smoke and ashes! This, as Cowley would have said, is to put out the fire of genius by that of the torch; to extinguish the light of reason in that of its own funeral pyre; to make matter once more triumph over mind. Possibly, however, our loss is rather imaginary than real, greater in quantity than in quality. Men's intellects, like their frames, continue pretty much the same in all ages, and the human faculty, limited in its sphere of action, and operating always upon the same materials, soon arrives at an impassable acme which leaves us nothing to do but to ring the changes upon antiquity. Half our epic poems are modifications of Homer, though none are equal to that primitive model; our Ovidian elegies, our Pindarics, and our Anacreontics, all resemble their first parents in features as well as in name. Fertilizing our minds with the brains of our predecessors, we raise new crops of the old grain, and pass away to manure the intellectual field for future harvests of the same description. Destruction and reproduction is the system of the moral as well as of the physical world.

THE LITTLE ALEXANDERS.

Human action is capable of performance on the most varying scale, whether it be right or wrong action. Men may be benevolent or malevolent, benefactors or malefactors, in degrees—humble doers of good deeds in obscurity, with few eyes, besides those of the Allseeing, witnessing their lives, or public benefactors, blessing whole communities, or states, or even nations, with their bounty of heart and head and purse!

The deeds of the great actors find, ever and anon, imitators among the small ones. But, unfortunately for the world's true progress, the evil is more apt to be imitated than the good—the deeds of a Nero or a Caligula, rather than those of a Cincinnatus or a Trajan, of a prosecuting Saul rather than a Paul preaching peace and good will, of a Haynau rather than a Howard, of an Arnold rather than a Washington. The military conquerors have had imitators in profusion, and none of them more than the world-conqueror, Alexander the Great. But, what is most noticeable about his followers, is that they are to be met in all the peaceful walks of life. When he conquered the whole of the then known world, he exhibited the weak side of his character, by weeping because there was no more bloody work for him to do—no more worlds to conquer. So they, after they have conquered whatever difficulties lie in the way of their successes—their triumphant marches to fame or fortune, which they have, perhaps, reached from poverty and obscurity—imitate him with exhibitions of the most puerile ambition, and fret themselves to death, because they cannot accomplish more! He quareled with his best friends, those who helped him most. So do these little Alexanders. Perhaps they slay them, in their frenzy! as he did, and commit suicide in the end, by way of making the imitation complete—for this the Great Alexander virtually did, when he drank himself to death!

STREET EDUCATION.

Probably there never has been a summer vacation among the schools of New York during which so many children have been kept in the country, as the one recently closed. The absence of noisy urchins from the streets was so marked as scarcely to have escaped the notice of the most casual observer. At this he could not have failed to rejoice. Of all the schools in which a child may be found, there is none so bad as that in which he gets his street education. This is bad enough anywhere, but especially bad in large cities.

SYMPATHIES AND PREJUDICES.

Were antipathies entirely confined to human nature, it might be more ashamed of itself than it has reason to be, considering the actual state of the case. For, sharing as it does its uncontrollable aversions in common with all things animal and vegetable, as well as with the meaner productions of nature, it may console itself in the certainty that these repugnances are quite inseparable from moral as well as material existence, in its most sublime as well as its lowest gradations. Pliny, at the head of the naturalists, points out the animosity existing between stones, even as well as minerals and metals. The diamond, he remarks, is in dissension with the loadstone, while a particular stone of Ethiopia, which he specifies, repulses iron with as much force as the magnet attracts it. Among minerals and metals, gold and mercury unite together with an ardor equal to human friendships, while others oppose and fly off from their associates in the crucible, with as much sputtering and asperity as might be found among the rival belles of the most romantic and unsophisticated village. It is the same with plants. The vine has its peculiar attachments and enmities. It can live on excellent terms with the elm, and twines round the apple-tree with the most insinuating fondness; but the vicinage of a cabbage, is mortal to its comfort, and sometimes even to its existence. It is unnecessary to swell the list of vegetable animosities; but let us look for a moment at animal dislikes. We can all understand the feelings that impel the sheep to shun the wolf, or the dove to fly from the kite. It is as needless to ask *why*, as to demand a reason for the rich man's shrinking from a doctor, or one in health from an attorney. But how are we to account for the terrible lion trembling at the crowing of a cock, the ponderous elephant waddling off at the sight of the ram, or the valiant war-horse shuddering at the odor of the camel? These are the extraordinary facts that force us into the mysteries of occult research, and the study of natural sympathies and dislikes. There can be no doubt that the secret, in these instances where the antipathy is possessed by one genus against the whole of another, consists in some mystery of organic construction, that we may indulge a hope of seeing one day discovered.

EAVESDROPPERS.

In the whole vocabulary of social pests there is nothing more contemptible than the eavesdropper. This is true of him whether his practices spring from the motive of idle curiosity alone, or with that of the mischief-maker combined. The only difference between the two cases is, that the one superadds wickedness to weakness. Did all those who are addicted to eavesdropping come within the original definition of the word, this social evil would not be near so great as now. It is not, indeed, from those who creep under the eaves of our dwellings by night, to catch our family secrets, dropped unluckily from the windows, that they may retail them with the tongue of the gossip, that we have most to fear. They are few in number, and comparatively powerless towards the great mass of the people. It is, rather, a much larger class, who are found everywhere in the walks of life. These latter are by no means so shy as the other. Not content with shivering in the winter's wind beneath your eaves, or exposing themselves to the droppings of the rain as well as of your secrets, they make their way into your parlor, and your counting-room, or other place of business. With the smile of affected friendship upon their faces, they learn whatever you may be unguarded enough, because unsuspicious, to tell them, and straightway put it to the most selfish account imaginable. This they do without the slightest regard to the injurious consequences to your character or your business.

To all eavesdroppers we would commend a maxim, which has been classed as the eleventh commandment—"*Mind your own business.*" Universal obedience to it would ensure a most beneficent reform.

AN EXTRAVAGANT TURK.

Abdul Medjid, the Sultan of Turkey, is the most extravagant fellow alive. His income is seven millions five hundred thousand dollars ($7,500,000) a year, and yet he has contrived to run in debt to the incomprehensible amount of two thousand millions of dollars ($2,000,000,000), and is increasing the sum at the rate of several millions per annum. Two thousand millions of dollars! Who can conceive anything like a tangible idea of such a sum of money? *One* million of dollars is a "big pile." We suppose that any of our readers would be content with a business or salary which would yield him a clear profit, over all expenses, of five thousand dollars a year. Well, now, good reader, suppose you could annually lay away $5,000, how long would it take you to "stack up a million?" It would take you just two hundred years! This little computation will give one some idea of *one* million of dollars, but how shall we comprehend two thousand millions? Were this amount, in gold, loaded on carts, each cart containing half a ton, and occupying, with its horse, a space of one rod, the procession would extend over twenty miles. Were the whole sum piled up in gold at the distance of one mile from any man's house, and he offered the "entire pile" on condition that he should remove it with his own hands (without material aid except bags to carry it in) to his dwelling in five years, he could not do it. How, then, shall that extravagant Turk ever pay such a debt?

"ROLLING STONES."

There is a class of people, in every community, whose besetting sin is restlessness. No sooner are they comfortably fixed in some branch of business, than they take a notion of something different. They straightway sell out, and commence in a new line—and, just as likely as not, it is "new" to them in the fullest sense of the word. The business they abandoned they *did* understand; but they imagined that they had "no taste for it," and did not stop to consider whether or not they had a "taste" for the untried duties of the new position! Failing in this, they rail at their predecessors, for deceiving them, as to the amount of custom which the stand had secured. There has, probably, been no deception practised upon them, at all. They had not a proper knowledge of the wants of the customers, nor the necessary tact to sell to them, if they had. So the stand "runs down." Imagining that the fault is in the location—that the "stand" is not a good one—they move to another, only to encounter a worse failure—perhaps, to lose the remnant of their "old customers," or rather those of their more prudent and managing predecessors, while attracting but few new ones, and finally close up, or "burst up," in hopeless despair! The proverb tells the "rolling stones" that they will surely gather no moss; but they heed not its monition. They follow the course pointed out by another popular proverb, "all things by turns, and nothing long," and reap the inevitable fruits of their folly.

FRESH FERN LEAVES.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1855, by ROBERT BONNER, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

NOTES OF A SUMMER TOUR.

NUMBER VI.

Slow old Boston is waking up at last. Washington street is nearly as dirty as New York streets. Old landmarks are fast disappearing, new stores are springing up on the sites of old dwelling houses, and the wheel of progression is going round in that latitude, in a way to make an old resident stare. What a pity it could not extend to the Boston *newspapers!*

Tortured with a slow fever and racking cough during my stay there, I could only ride round to make my investigations, with the exception of one short walk, during which I had the felicity of meeting the greatest scoundrel that Boston can boast—a sight hardly worth rising from a sick bed to see. For months I had so longed to see "The Common;" (how I like that good, homely name.) How I feasted my eyes upon its fountain and trees, its green banks and its nicely-kept gravel walks, over which time has so closely woven its net-work of leaves, that you can scarce believe them to be the same your feet used to tread, up and down, and across, in all weather and moods, but chiefly when nature seemed to you the only safe and soothing confidant of anguish of spirit else intolerable. Old associations, how thick and fast they came. Tripping feet flew over the greensward, that no eyes but mine could see; golden locks floated on the wind, whose rare beauty had only a parallel in a severed tress, precious as the little head lying low in Mount Auburn.

"Mother! mother!" not from around this tree, nor yet that, did the little, merry face peep, nor from this grassy bank, nor that shaded pathway, nor yet by the cool plash of the fountain, where childish feet loved best to stray, did that most musical call come. Other little forms there were there—God grant them long to bless the homes they brighten—but not *hers*—not *hers*.

Beacon street, Boston's Fifth Avenue, is looking its loveliest now, since its inhabitants have had the good taste to drape their balconies and doorways with the luxuriant woodbine, tossing out its long, green tendrils, as the wind comes sweeping over Charles River, laden with sweets rifled from the hay-fields beyond. I should marvel, did I not know how powerless are outside belongings to secure happiness, or even content, that such residences should be abandoned by their inmates when most attractive; putting aristocracy out of the question of neighborhood, no lovelier spot could be found for a city home all the year round. What lunatic was permitted to daub the "State House" its present sulphureous hue I did not inquire; astonishment struck me dumb; I drove quickly past it to feast my eyes on the rural beauty of Cambridge, of which one never tires, no more than of sweet Mt. Auburn, which I will persist in preferring to Greenwood, though I have been talked out of breath so many times by the admirers of the latter, among whom I number myself, with the above amendment. Ah, here we are, now; the old gateway is the same, under which so many bereaved ones have passed tearfully, saying, "Thou hast taken away my idol, and what have I left?"

Stay—what is this? Where are the tall sentinel pines, whose aromatic leaves, dropping upon the pathway, muffled the sound of our carriage wheels as we slowly passed into their dim shades, softening so tenderly the garish, mocking sunlight for weeping eyes, as the wind whispered through them, "Peace—be still!" Where are they? Like the face of a dear, long absent friend, upon whose breast I had often leaned, I yearned to see them. *Hewn down!* by the hand of "modern improvement!" Heaven grant us patience to look upon such sacrilege by the stupidity of somebody—it is little matter who—since a century could scarce make good the cruel devastation. I should like to take down a tall monument I saw in Mt. Auburn to a bogus philanthropist, and, effacing the lying inscription, write one to the memory of those giant pines, and erect it on the spot where they fell. May the tongue be palsied that spoke their death-knell, before it does any more mischief. Well, it is of no use fretting—everybody says that when they are through doing it, and Mt. Auburn is not the place for anger; and yet, if there ever was an exceptionable case, this is it. I call upon every one whose dead are garnered there—to whom the place is holy—to join issue with me against this unpardonable desecration. One word more while on this subject. It seems hard that the owners of "lots" in Mt. Auburn, *living at a distance*, should see them, on their annual visits, overgrown with weeds and nettles for that reason. As I stood over *my* dead I felt grieved that the flowers planted by love, and watered by tears, should be so neglected by those who should perform the duty for which they are hired, without regard to eye-service. Some day I shall lie there myself; till I do, this will not cease to pain me.

Apart from these things of which I have spoken, the general appearance of Mt. Auburn is much improved. The chapel especially, which has been renovated and adorned with two fine statues. The one to Chief Justice Story is a just tribute to the worth of the original, and a glory to the filial heart and hand of the sculptor. The Tower is a great accession, and though I was too ill to get out of the carriage to see the view from the top, those of our party who did so, used up the dictionary in its praise. We returned by way of Brighton, which announced itself to our olfactories in the usual manner; from thence over the Western Avenue, home to our hotel. For the one hundred and fiftieth time I smiled at the wooden look of those Boston women, and the wooden way they locomote the streets. Boston and New York should be shook up in a bag together. It would be the salvation of both. FANNY FERN.

THROUGH THE LOWLY TO THE LOFTY.

This is the path which greatness has oftenest been called upon to tread. The experience of Lagrange, as recorded by himself, that he would never have reached the eminence he did as a mathematician, had he been the possessor of a fortune, is the almost universal experience of the sons of genius. They have, like him, carved their own way to success through the rocky and craggy barriers of Adversity's mountain. The impulse of a noble enthusiasm has spurred them on—an enthusiasm born of their very necessities, and such as the children of wealth never feel! Such were the examples of Adrian VI., studying the languages by the street-lamps in London; of young Ferguson, studying astronomy by the light of the stars, amid his flocks; of Samuel Johnson, too ragged to dine with his bookseller; of Linnœus, in his clouted shoes, studying the botany of Lapland; and of Dr. Adam Clarke, starved, and almost frozen to death, amid his scanty books, at Kingswood! In the words of Ossian,—

"Danger flies from the lifted sword:
They best succeed who dare!"

A GRAPE LEAF.

Reader, be good enough to step into my room. It is, as you see, on the first floor. Observe that eastern window, which looks out on a piazza, in the interval of which, right opposite to the window, is a grape vine, supported by a wire trellice. You see there a very large grape leaf, hanging apart from the rest, so that it looks quite distinct on the dark blue ground of the sky beyond. I came down at very early dawn, and when I pushed open the shutters, what a spectacle did that grape leaf present! It was still wet with the copious dew of the past night, and every one of its lobes and tiny points was tipped with a droplet of dew, all of which glistened in the morning light like diamonds of the first water. I have seen Victoria in all her glory—but she was not arrayed like that grape leaf. The jeweled diadem which adorned her brow was not so beautiful, not so splendid a decoration as that circlet of beaming dew-drops. Such beautiful things you may see almost every morning. You may see the most gorgeously attired bridegroom that ever eye beheld coming out of his chamber. You may see a king, whose realm includes all earthly monarchies, sitting in the East,

"High on a throne of royal state, which far
Outshines the wealth of Ormus or of Ind,"

and all his subjects, in honor of the occasion dressed out in their best: so humble a thing as a grape leaf wearing jewels which would put a queen's diadem to shame! But you must be in time. The show is as brief as it is brilliant and magnificent. It is only to be seen at the moment when retiring Night has dropped her innumerable jewels, and advancing Day makes them flash in his earliest light. An hour later, and the coronation scene is over. The skies which erewhile were

"Robed in flames and amber light,
The clouds with thousand liveries dight,"

have been stripped of those splendid decorations; the

—"Stars of evening, dew-drops which the Sun
Impearls on every leaf and every flower,"

have disappeared as well as the "stars of night," and all nature has put on her sober, every day, (or rather *all-day*,) working suit. If you would see nature in her highest beauty, and her richest attire, you must see her in the morning. ***

AN ENERGETIC TOPER.

Once there was a man who was fond of his cups, and he lived in one of the towns on Connecticut River. It was a long time ago, back in the last century, before those who liked to drink were ever troubled by temperance societies, and when they were probably not as often remonstrated with as in our day. He was left to himself, and drank as much as he pleased, at least when he could get it; for it is not to be supposed that, in a new country, where almost everybody drank something strong every day, and before stills were put in operation, or even apple-trees were old enough to bear fruit, there was always an abundant supply of liquor.

Yet, strange as it may seem, the man suddenly took a temperance turn himself, and came to the conclusion, in his own mind, without any influence from without, that he had better stop drinking. He loved his family, and said to himself words like these: "If I go on drinking, I shall become a drunkard—and what is a drunkard to his wife and children? He is not a good husband, or a good father. Now I wish to be both; but I know I am not sure of being so unless I stop drinking. Again, I am not sure I can stop drinking while I live here, where everybody drinks. I have already got to like it very much, and I am afraid to trust myself. Here I am in the den of the wild beast—how can I keep out of the lion's mouth? I must move off somewhere beyond the reach of danger, and that is nowhere but out of the reach of temptation."

A short time after this a canoe, going up the river, was seen—perhaps by nothing but the beasts, birds, or fishes, for there were then no settlements on its banks above that place. It rowed up to a fine meadow, where the oarsman landed, took out a few articles he had brought with him, and began to cut down trees, and build a log-house. It was our friend, the toper. There he remained and worked until he had made a little farm, and made himself a good character, his wife a good husband, and his children a good father. The place where he landed is in the oldest township of Vermont.

MOROSENESS.

There is no habit more deleterious than moroseness, to its victim—indeed, we might safely add to all with whom he is in any way brought into association. It is bad enough to have a peevish or fretful companion or associate—to hear him complaining about everything that does not go right, that is, right in the estimation of the fretter! But it is far worse to have a morose one. The former may be expected to give vent to his morbid feelings in his words—to scold them away as it were!—and to have seasons of pleasantry, and of at least modified happiness. But not so with the latter. It is impossible for him to be happy, to say nothing of his associates being so. Such an one is an unmitigated pest. His very presence is a mental poison! Moroseness seems to be a blighting disease, a fact which is forcibly illustrated by the history of the insane. Physicians, as a general rule, expect fewer recoveries among the sullen than the talkative, the symptons of the former indicating that the mental malady is taking root deeply and fixedly.

FORGIVENESS.

Amongst all the proverbs, maxims, and apothegms, which the poets have furnished, there is none more useful than the familiar line,

"To err is human, to forgive divine."

The context of this conveys such admirable advice, that it deserves equal familiarity, running, as it does, thus:

"For every trifle scorn to take offense!
That always shows great pride or little sense.
Good nature and good sense must always join,
To err is human, to forgive divine."

We commend this string of pearls to our young readers. Its truths cannot be too familiarly or strongly impressed upon their minds. There is nothing more beautiful than forgiveness of real injuries. And, as for imaginary ones—the trifles spoken of by the poet—it should require no effort to overlook them in our erring fellow-beings.

A "CHARMING" FELLOW.

According to newspaper reports, there is a man "down South" who comes it over rattlesnakes, adders, and all manner of poisonous reptiles, with an ease that is utterly appalling. He is among snakes what Rarey is among horses. Bring a copperhead, adder, rattlesnake, or any of the rest of 'em, face to face with him, and the reptile succumbs, "forgets the cunning of his tooth," and cuddles down in the bosom of the charmer like a pet kitten or a love-sick girl. This is a great country, and the snake-charmer aforesaid is a native thereof.

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

THE Christian may well hail the march of intellect, because he knows that a reason that is cultivated is the best support of a worship that is pure. The Temple of Truth, like the indestructible pillar of Smeaton, is founded on a rock; it triumphs over the tempest and brightens the very billows that impetuously but impotently rush to overwhelm it.

A BACHELOR, writing us from the interior of California, says that although young women from this side of the continent often arrive unmarried on the Californian coast, they never get in that condition to the interior. He says that, like misfortunes, they "*never come single.*"

WE hate a crooked, crabbed, obscure, impenetrable style. We should no more think of trying to force our way through such an impediment, to get at any thoughts contained within, than of breaking our teeth upon a hickory-nut for the sake of the kernel.

FORTUNE is painted blind; but, when she cheers the needy with hope and depresses the wealthy with distrust and care, she confers the richest boon on the poorest man, and injures those upon whom she has lavished her favors.

"WHAT fortune have you, sir?" said a susceptible lady to a stranger, who was courting her. "I have a single jewel, Miss, that I would not part with for fifty thousand dollars." She married him and found that the jewel he meant was his *nose*.

BLISS has no programme; happiness is not bottled like wine for future use; it is like dew—remove it from the flower and take it out of the morning, and, though you put it in a cup of pearls, it is only a drop of water.

THE people of one of our Western fancy-towns boast of the fertility of the soil everywhere in their neighborhood. In proof of that vaunted fertility, they can point triumphantly to the luxuriance of the grass in their streets.

PERHAPS some persons should be excused for speaking constantly of their religion. It seems quite hard that those, who make no other use of religion than to talk about it, should be denied even that privilege.

WHEN a young woman marries an old man for his money, he should certainly let her have it all. If she takes him, that she doesn't want, he should let her have his gold that she *does*.

"Is the smoke of my cigarette unpleasant to you, sir?" "Oh no, madam, I would rather inhale smoke from your beautiful lips than taste kisses from any others."

WE are not more ingenious in searching out bad motives for good actions when performed by others than good motives for bad actions when performed by ourselves.

A MAN was recently convicted in Kentucky of stealing his neighbor's cows and hiding them in his cellar. It was thought a cowardly mode of *cow-hiding*.

WE always think of a very mean man that he was made by one of nature's cobblers, and, like an unfinished boot, thrown off without being *souled*.

A HUNTER killed four wild-cats the other day upon the bank of the Kentucky River. That's the only "wild-cat bank" we have heard of in Kentucky.

THE editors in one of the small towns of Arkansas are *badly posted*. They have just been posting each other as liars, villains and swindlers.

DESPISE not the small and the weak. The fly and the locust have done more harm than ever the bears and lions did.

DISTRUST all who flatter you. Take counsel of your own heart, and be careful lest you find a flatterer even there.

IF you adopt another's lie, you show that you would willingly have been its proper father.

BEWARE of self-praise. The breath of others raises our fame; but our own as surely prostrates it.

No swindler has assumed so many names as self-love, or is so much ashamed of his own.

WE generally find great power of *principal* and great weakness of *principle* combined in the same individual.

WITH ladies of taste you cannot hope to accomplish much unless you are yourself accomplished.

SMALL sands make the mountain, moments make the year, and trifles life.

WE hate moustaches. We would almost as soon be *hare* lipped as *hair*-lipped.

A VETERAN performer upon the tread-mill boasted that he was a *revolutionary hero*.

NIGHT-LABOR will in time destroy the student. The marrow of his own bones fills his lamp.

THE coat of a horse is the gift of nature. That of an ass is often the work of the tailor.

BE the companion of vice and you will soon be its slave.

CURRENT ITEMS.

THE Chinese *people* are said to be rejoiced at the prospect of "mixing with the outside barbarians" which the recent treaties with England, France and the United States open up to them. They say they prefer the barbarian (that is English, French and American) women to the daughters of the sun and the sisters of the moon, (as they call their own "last best gifts,") and that "*now they hope to be able to buy as many of them as they want.*"

A FEW days since a carman in Brooklyn became enraged at his horse, which baulked in Fulton street, and struck it so violent a blow on the right knee as to fracture the leg. The horse had of course to be killed, and as it was a valuable beast, the brutal owner was severely punished by the loss, for his cruelty. We have no patience with a man who will illtreat a dumb beast, and especially so noble a creature as the horse.

A SHORT time since Daniel Newman, in a quarrel with Thomas J. Bise, at New Albany, Miss., struck him with a pocket-knife, and, to his great horror, unfortunately killed him. Although the homicide is stated to have been unmistakeably accidental, the crowd which had gathered round would listen to no expostulations from the few orderly people present, but hung Newman to the rafter of an old shed near the spot.

QUEEN VICTORIA having heard wonderful stories of American trotting horses, recently had the head groom of her stables secure her a pair; but, not being well trained, they took the bits in their mouths, and so endangered the royal neck that the experiment was given up, the queen good-naturedly saying that Yankee horses have too much of the Bunker Hill spirit in them for royalty.

THE editor of the "Cumberland (Md.) Telegraph" rejoices in a *singing mouse*, which comes out of its hole, perches on the editorial desk, regales itself on the editorial paste, and then pays for its board with a song "like that of a Canary bird, its notes being sweet and melodious."

A YOUNG man named William Craft was recently sentenced by a cross old English judge to six years' imprisonment for assault for kissing a young lady against her will, but the Queen, not seeing any very great harm in a kiss, pardoned the offender.

A MAN named Gardiner recently committed a brutal murder in Polk county, Texas, and the people, fearing that he would escape the hangman, took the matter into their own hands, and completely riddled the poor wretch's body with rifle bullets and buck-shot.

AT a recent powder-mill explosion at Enfield, Conn., four men who were in the building were blown into the air and instantly killed, one having the upper part of his skull taken off as smoothly as though it had been done with an ax.

THE London Times is now claiming all the credit and glory of the Atlantic Telegraph for the British, saying that they conceived it, worked it out, paid for it, and *did* it. "Truth crushed to earth," &c.

A. W. SHOTT and S. Knott lately fought a duel in Mississippi, when Knott was shot and Shott was not. Under the circumstances we would rather have been Shott than Knott.

FOUR horses were entered at the recent trotting match of the Hamilton (Ohio) county Fair, which were valued at fourteen thousand dollars.

A MAN named Thomas Henley, of Atlanta, Ga., who was shot not long since, lived four days and nineteen hours with a pistol ball in the right ventricle of his heart.

SEVERAL disgraceful pugilistic encounters are publicly announced to "come off" during the present month, in this State and in Canada. Are the authorities awake?

A SHORT time since no less than eight young men and boys, the youngest being only ten years of age, were arrested in Quincy, Mass., for incendiarism.

AT last accounts from Frazer River provisions were so scarce the people were suffering severely. Dog meat was selling at a dollar a pound.

SEPULCHRAL PRIDE.

BY MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY.

Within another's tomb he slept,
He, whom astonished angels saw
From Heaven's high majesty descend
And bow to take a mortal law.

Another's tomb! Oh, restless Pride,
That on through life man's heart doth stir,
Canst thou no humbling lesson learn
From yonder rock-hewn sepulcher?

Say, what avails thy watchful toil,
Thy sleepless care from sun to sun,
Thy pomp of epitaph and fane,
Save but to see thyself outlone?

Go where the Turk his cypress rears,
To Pere-la-Chaise, with garlands strown,
And each Necropolis shall boast
Some monument to shame thine own.

Some column of more lofty hight,
Some architrave of bolder art,
Some sculptured form of living grace,
To speak more strongly to the heart.

The pyramid, that toward the cloud
Aspires with undisputed claim,
In dark oblivion's stagnant pool
Let fall, and lost its founder's name.

Man bargaineth for so much bronze,
For so much marble o'er his head,
Regardless of the deeds that keep
His memory from the noteless dead.

What if his slumbering clay should rest
Without a stone in stranger-ground?
Or 'neath the heaving ocean sleep
Till the last angel's trump shall sound?

Let atom unto atom fleet,
On blast, or storm, or riven sod,
The record of the life alone
Hath power or permanence with God.

So, render back thy dust to dust,
Ashes to ashes, dew'd with prayer;
Restore each element its trust,
The earth, the water and the air,

To each its part.—The soul to God!
Be wise for that which cannot die;
And by a stainless life engrave
Fit tablet for Eternity.

September 9th, 1858.

RICHARD HOFFMAN;

OR,

THE PEASANT AND THE NOBLEMAN.

A TALE OF LOVE AND RETRIBUTION.

CHAPTER LXXXVIII.

BITTER FRUIT.

Never did any man proceed with a lighter heart or more benevolent spirit to complete the work of reconciliation so happily commenced, than Peter Mangles did when he set out from Meldown Park to visit George Hoffman at the Elms. Although at times fretful and somewhat hasty in his temper, especially when anything went wrong in the City, the old man possessed a kind and forgiving heart, and in his simplicity—for he was exceedingly simple out of business—judged every human being by the same standard that he did himself, carrying anger as the flint bears fire—a hasty spark and all was over.

"How happy George will be," he thought, as the carriage rolled along the common which extended between the hall and the seat of Mr. Thornton. "Of course he must have a share in the firm, and take the name of Bently. Bently and Son!" he repeated several times to himself, with an air of intense satisfaction. "Mary must take care," he added, "that the name does not become extinct."

Peter had been accustomed for so many years to look upon our hero as lost forever to his family, that the possibility of his return never entered into his speculations.

Next he wondered what Mary could possibly have meant when she spoke of consigning herself, and asking him to sign the invoice. On any other subject the phrases invoice and consignment would have delighted him, for he relished any allusion to business; but when his long-cherished plans were at stake—no, with all his love for the fair girl, Peter could not smile at that.

On reaching the Elms, he was shown into the library, where he found George Hoffman and his partner. The former had two open letters in his hand, and appeared greatly excited.

"How is my old friend?" inquired Mr. Thornton.

"Better," replied the messenger of peace, as he believed himself, joyfully, "though still weak and suffering. How can a man fail to be better who has just settled a bad account—brought it to a satisfactory conclusion? His heart is as light as mine is."

Here the speaker looked around as if exceedingly anxious to shake hands with some one.

"Reconciled with his daughter?" exclaimed the manufacturer, with a benevolent smile. "I am heartily glad to hear it."

The husband of Rachel still remained silent.

"And you, George," said Peter, looking anxiously into his face; "are you not glad?"

"For my wife's sake, yes," replied Mr. Hoffman.

"And your child's."

"Mary will be rich enough for happiness," observed her father.

"There is something more than money, or even business, necessary to make us happy in this world," answered the clerk, "and no one ought to know it, George, better than yourself. It is a heart at peace with all mankind. Richard feels it so, and this day will complete the work of reconciliation. Your father-in-law desires to see you."

"Reflect," whispered Mr. Thornton to his partner, who made no other reply than by glancing significantly at the open letters.

Peter Mangles walked up to him, and placed his hand affectionately upon his arm.

"What is the matter, George?" he asked. "Any bad news from the City? Any misfortune that money——"

"The greatest," interrupted the father of our hero. "One gold cannot gild or success efface: a stain upon my good name—an impeachment upon that which, even in the midst of poverty and shame, the drunkard's degradation, I preserved pure and unsullied—my honesty. Read that—read that, and then judge my feelings."

The speaker, greatly excited, thrust the letters into the hands of his aged friend and benefactor.

The career of George Hoffman, since his reformation, had been one of unbroken prosperity; success had smiled upon his efforts, and he was now not only a prosperous, but a wealthy man. The requirements of his rapidly increasing commerce rendered it advisable for him to open an account with the Bank of England, and he had made an application to that effect only two days before quitting London.

The letters were the reply to it.

The first was an official one, declining his account; the second contained a private communication from one of the directors, a personal friend, explaining the reasons of the refusal.

Letters written by Mr. Bently to his nephew, Carus Kearn, had been produced, in which the former accused his son-in-law with having abstracted certain valuable securities whilst in his employ.

Poor Peter groaned with mortification and disappointment as he finished reading them.

"The villain!" he exclaimed; "the heartless, ungrateful villain! I have long suspected this," he added, "and know that Mr. Bently now bitterly regrets his intemperate rashness."

"Intemperate!" repeated Mr. Hoffman, ironically. "I admire the word intemperate. The man who, in a cowardly and vindictive spirit, could blast the reputation of one as honest as himself, is a villain."

"Yes, yes," muttered the clerk. "Carus is all that."

"I speak not of the nephew, whose pitiful malice I can despise, but of his uncle."

"Of your father-in-law!" exclaimed the old man, in a tone of astonishment so naïve that it made Mr. Thornton smile.

"Of him."

"George! George! is this just? is it business-like, when I come with offers of peace and forgiveness? For your wife's sake, for Mary's sake, for all our sakes, recall that wretched word."

"Never!" interrupted the husband of Rachel; "there are injuries no atonement can efface, and this is one of them. I can forgive my father-in-law that he held back when a helping hand might have saved me—preserved a home for his daughter and her children; his wealth was his own, and he alone was answerable for the use he made of it. But when in his malice he assails my good name—brands me with dishonesty—I spurn the tie he only now remembers, and reject his offers with scorn and contempt. He shall not call me hypocrite," he added, bitterly, "as well as thief."

The speaker repeated the word thief several times, then passed his hand athwart his brow to

SETTLING A LONG-STANDING ACCOUNT.

hide the tears wounded pride wrung from him. As for Peter, he had sunk into a chair, where he sat gazing on him, a picture of helpless sorrow: the blow had all but overwhelmed him.

"You regard this affair too seriously," observed Mr. Thornton; "an accusation made at the moment of your marriage, and unsupported by proofs, can never weigh with honorable men. Your father-in-law has long since regretted it."

"He regret it! you do not know him, sir," interrupted his partner; "his heart is granite."

"George! George!" ejaculated the old clerk, "do not say such dreadful things."

"He does regret it," repeated the manufacturer, "and this unhappy circumstance justifies me in divulging a secret, which otherwise I should have felt it my duty to have kept."

"A secret!"

"Who do you imagine first induced me to take you into my employ?"

"I know not," muttered the agitated man, who writhing under the sting of an unmerited accusation, paid but slight attention to his words.

"Mr. Bently."

"Did you hear that, George?" demanded Peter Mangles, starting from his chair; "did you hear that?"

"True," continued Mr. Thornton, "that your own industry and good conduct did the rest, backed by the assistance of your kind friend here."

"I have no merit," exclaimed the clerk, "claim no merit. It was Richard who advanced the money."

In his anxiety to make peace between his employer and his son-in-law, the good old man forbore to explain all the circumstances attending the transaction.

"Mr. Bently!"

"Mr. Bently," repeated Peter; "won't that soften you? Think of your wife, George, recollect all that she has suffered, and don't cast a gloom over her happiness and Mary's. I speak not of your own or their interests, for I know that you are above such considerations."

"Had there been a reason—the shadow of a pretext for such an accusation," observed Hoffman, his resolution somewhat moved by the appeal.

"There was a reason," said Peter Mangles.

This was uttered so seriously that it startled both his hearers, who eagerly called on him to explain himself.

"A few weeks previous to the return of Mr. Bently from abroad," continued the clerk, I placed in the iron safe at his residence securities belonging to the firm—Indian securities for ten thousand pounds. This took place before your marriage with Rachel, when you were a frequent visitor at the house, George."

"Pray proceed," said the latter, impatiently.

"The next day they were missing," resumed the old man; "how, I have never been able to divine, for I slept with the keys under my pillow, but so it was—the following morning they were gone."

"And I have been all these years suspected of having taken them!" exclaimed Hoffman.

"Not by me, George," replied Peter; "not by me. Richard, it is true, suspected you; but I told him he was wrong—how correctly your petty-cash book always balanced when you were only a boy in the office—but he would not believe me. Anger at your marriage with Rachel had blinded his better judgment."

"Say his sense of justice."

"Well, George, perhaps it had," observed the old man, deprecatingly. "The best of us may detect an error in our accounts. In a moment of irritation, he wrote those letters to Carus which the rascal has made so infamous a use of. I know that he has repeatedly requested him to give them up, declaring his conviction of your innocence; but the hypocrite pretended he had destroyed them."

"How do you intend to act?" inquired Mr. Thornton of his partner, who paced the library several times before he could make up his mind to answer him.

"I shall return to London this very day," he said, at last.

"And not see your wife and Mary?" ejaculated the messenger, who trusted to their intercession to accomplish the rest.

"As a husband and a father," continued the speaker, without noticing the interruption, "my first duty is to preserve my name unblemished; I may one day have a son to inherit it. Should Providence restore him to me, I must be able to meet him without a blush. God!" he added, "is there a pang—can human malice invent a torture so exquisite as to compel a parent to stand dishonored in the presence of his child?"

His partner pressed his hand in token of his sympathy.

"You are right," he said. "Your presence in London must give the lie to this most odious calumny. I will return with Peter to the hall and explain the cause of your absence to your wife. Come, old friend," he added, clapping the last-mentioned personage familiarly upon the shoulder, "the good work you have labored for years to accomplish is only delayed; as we well know, a tangled account requires being carefully gone over."

This was one of those truths which appealed so directly to the clerk's experience and peculiar view of things, that, if it failed to reconcile him to the disappointment, it prevented his making any further attempt to induce George Hoffman to forego his resolution.

As the messenger returned to Meldown Park, accompanied by the owner of the Elms, it was arranged between them that the real cause of her husband's absence should be kept a secret not only from Rachel, but from her father.

"Could I have foreseen this happy change, observed Mr. Thornton, after explaining the motive of his visit to the invalid and Mrs. Hoffman, "I would have gone to London myself, where the presence of George or myself is imperatively necessary."

This, at least, was a truth, although kindly meant to mislead.

"Will he be absent long?" inquired Mr. Bently.

"Some days—a week at least," replied the partner of his son-in-law.

"We won't trouble you with business now, Richard," added Peter.

The merchant regarded both the speakers searchingly. The first one met his gaze without the slightest change of countenance, but the old clerk, who was the worst actor imaginable, grew exceedingly red in the face. Mr. Bently turned upon his pillow with a sigh, and asked no further questions.

By a dispensation of Providence, no less merciful than wise, affliction seldom overtakes us but a corresponding degree of strength is given to enable us to bear up against the blow. It proved so in the present instance; for, although the grandfather of our hero felt that in the loss he had sustained, his heart had received a wound which time might scar over but never heal, he found himself gradually recovering his former strength, and ere a week had elapsed was sufficiently strong, not only to quit his room, but, supported by the arm of Rachel or Mary, to take gentle exercise in the park.

Mother and daughter both wondered at the deep melancholy that weighed his spirits down—the feverish anxiety he expressed to quit a place now hateful to him, since every spot reminded him of his grandson, and he trembled lest some unguarded expression, or outbreak of sorrow should betray the secret which poisoned the springs of life.

"Very natural!" exclaimed Peter Mangles, to whom they expressed their surprise. "How can you expect that Richard should feel happy in such a horrible place, so far from the city; nothing but trees and flowers to look at; no business, no 'Change, no *Times*, till it's a day old. I should go mad here—mad! Rely upon it," he added, "there is nothing so conducive to longevity as the bustle and excitement of London, and its much abused *wholesome, healthy, smoky streets*."

His hearers smiled. They knew what an enthusiast the speaker was upon his favorite topic.

No wonder that, with these feelings, the old clerk watched the progress of his employer towards convalescence with intense satisfaction, or that he began to think it high time that he himself returned to "town." Business—although he had both written and received at least a dozen letters daily, and taken every precaution his experience could suggest—must, he felt assured, have suffered terribly from his absence; and business, as our readers are aware, was always a primary consideration with Peter Mangles.

The thought of what might be said or surmised on 'Change haunted him till he could endure it no longer, and he announced his departure for the following morning to Mr. Bently.

"Wait one day longer," said the latter, "only one, and I will accompany you."

Peter felt delighted at the resolution, but saw, as he gazed upon the still pale features of the speaker, that one day would be too soon.

"No, Richard," he answered, "you must not think of such a thing. The desire is natural, exceedingly natural—just what I should feel in your place; but, although you are better, wonderfully better, you are not strong enough to undertake a journey yet. You had better wait," he added, "the arrival of your son-in-law, and——"

"Pshaw!" interrupted the merchant; "you know as well as I do that George Hoffman has no intention of coming to Meldown—more, that he rejects my offers of reconciliation."

"I thought you had given up being suspicious," stammered Peter.

"If my suspicions are unjust you can at once disabuse me of them," observed Mr. Bently, calmly. "You have only to look me in the face and tell me that they are so—I never doubted your word yet, however I may have quarreled with your judgment."

The old clerk twice attempted to speak; but his courage failed him—he could not utter a lie.

"I am answered in your silence," added the speaker, with a sigh—"Rachel and her daughter will soon be taken from me; and I shall be left to die alone."

"No, Richard, no; nothing of the kind," exclaimed his friend, deeply moved at the tone of sorrow in which the words were uttered. "Rachel has proved herself too good a wife and mother ever to forget her duty as a child, even should her husband carry his resentment so far as to desire it."

"His resentment!" repeated the invalid.

"You do not know the cause."

On hearing this observation his hearer turned so pale that Peter became alarmed, and would have rung for assistance had not a movement on the part of Mr. Bently prevented him.

"Tell me all," he said; "I can endure it. Do you know the agonies of suspense?"

"I should think I do, Richard," replied the old man. "Haven't I watched every change in the money market for the last fifty years? There, I see what you mean, and I will tell it you. The letters you wrote to Carus, accusing George Hoffman of abstracting the securities, have brought forth bitter fruit. The heartless scoundrel has made them public; the consequence is that the Bank of England has refused to open an account with your son-in-law, who, in the eyes of the world, is a dishonored man."

To the astonishment of Peter Mangles, the intelligence which he expected would overwhelm him, appeared to afford his employer relief.

"Does my daughter know this?" demanded the merchant.

"Not *yet*," answered his informant; "but she soon must hear it. Your nephew has spread the slander—for it is a slander—in every direction. It would fall harmless enough," he added, with a sigh, "but for the authority of your name."

"The heartless villain!" murmured his uncle.

"I always told you that he was a villain," observed Peter; "but you would not believe me; and now you see the consequence—he triumphs over the man he so unjustly persecuted and hated."

"Never!" exclaimed Mr. Bently, with an energy which startled his faithful clerk. "I can crush the reptile—crush him in the face of day—draw his venomed fangs, and compel him to avow himself the author of the crime of which he accuses George. Why—why," he added, "was this concealed from me? You and Thornton, doubtless, both meant it kindly, but it might have led to fatal consequences."

The following morning, despite the remonstrances of Peter and the entreaties of his daughter, the speaker quitted Meldown, to proceed by easy stages to London, taking the bill—doubtless our readers have not forgotten the circumstance—that Richard cashed for Sandford in Calcutta, with him.

Two days after his departure, the funeral train of Sir Norman Boothroyd arrived at the hall, where it lay in state. Donbtless it would been a source of great satisfaction to the deceased baronet could he have seen how very properly Messrs. Scutcheon and Pall, the great West-end undertakers, conducted the whole affair; how exactly the family shield, with its sixteen quarterings, was blazoned. But, unfortunately, when once we have shaken off this mortal coil, we are no longer capable of deriving consolation from these things; were it otherwise, the late Sir Norman Boothroyd must have felt delighted at the unexceptionable manner in which his dignified corpse had been treated.

Velvet, painting, and gilding had done their best, or rather worst, to render death ridiculous. No train of sorrowing friends followed the remains to their last resting-place—no grateful poor blessed them as they passed. In lieu of these there were the two executors, the Earl of Carlington and Squire Blundell, Viscount Illston, who considered the necessity of his attending a great bore, the physician, and the lawyer, but not a single tenant either in the churchyard or in the church. The inhabitants of St. Faith's stood aloof from the procession as it passed through the village, and even the poor, in many instances, refused the funeral dole which Andrew Silex according to custom distributed.

"Norman must have been a great blockhead!" observed the Earl of Carlington to his son, as they returned from the funeral, "to have made himself so terribly unpopular in the county."

"He was decidedly an ass," lisped the viscount; "had he lived much longer he would have bored me to death."

"A magnificent property," said his lordship, willing to change the subject.

"Yes, but sadly encumbered."

The peer repeated the word with surprise, and added, that to his certain knowledge, there was not a single mortgage on the estate.

"I am aware of that," replied his son. "Alice is not exactly a mortgage."

"Illston! Illston!" exclaimed his father, angrily, "you really are a most intolerable puppy."

"I suppose so."

With which admission the conversation dropped.

CHAPTER LXXXIX.

THE IRON CHEST.

Into how reckless a state would mankind degenerate but for the presence of that inward monitor which, like a mirror, reflects our actions in their true light, and holds up a faithful image of ourselves, which some doggedly refuse to contemplate, whilst others merely snatch a hasty glance, and in the vortex of the world, its pursuits of avarice and ambition, or yet more ignoble passions, strive to forget the hideous portrait—(hideous from the stern truth of its resemblance)—which has for a moment startled them.

Conscience is the only painter that never flatters; and hence, like genius, it is rarely popular. There is no softening of shadows, no toning down of wrinkles in the likenesses drawn by its iron pencil; on the contrary, they stand boldly out, appealing to the soul with resistless eloquence, a voice in every touch of the great master's hand.

Were it possible to transfer these moral pictures to canvass, how inestimable would they become. Placed side by side with Titian, the gorgeous coloring of the glorious old Venetian would show pale; contrasted with the Dutch and Flemish schools, the wondrous detail and exquisite finish of Mieris, Breughel, Teniers, and Ostade, appear meagre and feeble; the *chef d'œuvre* of Michael Angelo, the "Last Judgment" of the Sistine would lose its sublime terror. Neither Cimabue nor Giotto could stand the test.

When Mr. Bently pronounced the word "assassin," the vail which obscured the portrait of Carus was for an instant drawn aside, and the ruffian beheld his own likeness in all its hideous deformity. Fear pointed her mocking finger at him, and he fled. The word haunted him even in his dreams—waking he muttered it to himself.

There was also a second monosyllable, an interrogative one, which he would have given much to have obtained an answer to—*Which?*

Something whispered to him that his safety depended upon that.

Long before reaching London he had made up his mind what steps to take; to decide was with him to act; anything appeared preferable to suspense, to a life of doubt, tortured by hourly fears, startled by shadows that might at any moment prove realities.

There is this peculiar fascination in crime, there is no getting rid of its memory; like a recurring decimal it will return, bringing with it a train of consequences. Murderers have been known to haunt the spot in which they have entombed their victims, the thief to linger round the scene of his depredations. The chain which fetters them may be an invisible one, but its links are not less of iron.

It was some such feeling which induced Carus, although the hour at which he arrived in London was a late one to wander in the direction of Clerkenwell, instead of proceeding to his own home—for in Clerkenwell dwelt the old dealer in drugs, of whom he was suspected of having purchased poison. We say suspected, for there were no proofs of his crime except moral ones. Neither Mr. Morton's investigations nor the patient perseverance of Styles, had succeeded in obtaining any direct evidence.

The last-mentioned personage had remained faithful to the promise he had made to Mr. Bently in Jersey. The secret of his fidelity was a very simple one: he was well paid, and it answered his purpose for once to act honestly. Gradually he had succeeded in obtaining the confidence of the old Hindoo, who, feeling himself growing every day more feeble, engaged Tom to reside with him by way of protection, for he was reputed to be rich, and lived in continual dread of being robbed and perhaps murdered. Thus the gold he had sinned for became his punishment.

With all his cunning, the artful spy had never succeeded in winning from the drug-vender the secret he was so anxious to obtain. Either his host had forgotten the circumstance of having sold Carus the poison, or was too suspicious to acknowledge it. The records of his transactions, if he kept any, Mr. Styles shrewdly suspected must be kept in a large iron chest of Indian workmanship, which stood by the bedside of the old man.

The contents of the aforesaid chest had long excited the curiosity and cupidity of Styles. He had frequently tried to lift it, but found it far too heavy; whilst the locks which secured it defied even his skill and experience to tamper with; but little doubt, however, existed in his own mind that it contained money.

As the Hindoo was childless, and had no relatives, at least, not in Europe, Tom looked upon himself as his natural heir, and, like most heirs, felt a nervous impatience to ascertain the amount of his inheritance.

It was, therefore, with intense satisfaction that he saw the lingering spark of life gradually wearing itself out, and counted the moments when he should come into possession.

For three days he had watched the dying man with feelings akin to those with which the vulture may be supposed to hover round the expiring wanderer in the desert; true, he had neither the vultures beak nor claws, but its ravenous instincts were not wanting.

"Why don't he die?" he muttered; "he must have as many lives as a cat, and they have nine, as the saying goes. I am sure it would be a mercy to *help* the old heathen out of the world."

He half rose from the stool by the bedside, but the thought of the consequences of *helping* the old

man, as he called it, to shuffle off this mortal coil, restrained him, and he re-seated himself.

A low murmuring sound broke from the old man's lips whose eyes were fixed upon the water-bottle on the broken table near him, but beyond his feeble reach.

"I dare say—wouldn't yer like it?" said the ruffian, with a chuckle; "but I ain't a-goin' to give it yer."

The glance of the Hindoo became terrible—a moment's strength, and the speaker might have paid a fearful penalty for his brutality.

"I tell yer I am tired of watching yer," continued Mr. Styles, after a pause, "it ain't by no means pleasant; but I'll make a bargain with you, if you like—answer the question I have so often asked you, and you shall have the water."

The sufferer shook his head in sign of refusal.

"Where are the keys of that box, then?"

His host attempted once more to speak, but anger choked him.

"You won't tell me, won't you?" said his self-constituted heir. "I've a great mind to make yer."

The speaker had once more started to his feet, and was approaching the bed, when a low, creaking sound caught his ear, and arrested his purpose. He listened for an instant; the noise was repeated: it came, evidently, from the adjoining passage.

Catching up the light, he opened the door of the room, and found himself face to face with his former employer, who had gained an entrance from the back of the old, dilapidated house, in order to obtain an interview with its owner, with what further intentions our readers can well imagine.

For an instant the two villains stood confounded, each at the presence of the other; but the confusion of Carus was the greatest, for he had long looked upon his agent as numbered with the dead, and he stood speechless with surprise and terror.

Styles was the first to speak.

"Mr. Kearn!" he exclaimed.

The sound of his own name broke the spell, and convinced the assassin that it was no vision of his excited imagination, but the man whom he believed he had murdered, who stood before him.

"Alive!" he gasped, in the tone of one who had just recovered his breath after receiving some fearful shock.

"No thanks to you," muttered his former confederate, bitterly. "I wonder you ain't ashamed to look me in the face after yer attempt to——"

"Accident—pure accident," interrupted the intruder, "which I have bitterly regretted."

An inarticulate "humph!" accompanied by an expressive shrug of the shoulders, informed the speaker the exact amount of credit his old acquaintance gave to the assertion.

"Stand back!" said the latter, as Carus advanced towards him; "I ain't a-going to run the risk of any more *such accidents*. There are plenty of neighbors within call."

"What do you do here?"

"I live here."

Carus slowly repeated the words, as if weighing what they might portend.

"For what purpose?" he added.

"To take care of the old man," replied Styles. "Your uncle employed me."

This information gave the nephew the key to the mystery he had so long sought.

"Mr. Bently is dead," he said.

His hearer made no reply, doubtful whether to credit the assertion or not.

"And you are his heir, I suppose?" said the fellow, in order still further to test him.

"No," answered Carus, bitterly; "he has left a most extraordinary will, bequeathing the bulk of his wealth to his grandson, should he ever prove forthcoming to inherit it, which I doubt. I have merely my share in the firm; he could not deprive me of that."

All this sounded so probable and truth-like that Styles, despite his cunning, was deceived, and began to ask himself whether it might not be advisable to let bygones be bygones, and reconcile himself to his former employer.

"Look you," he answered, "if I thought you would only act fairly by me——"

"*It is my interest to do so.*"

"Well, there is something in that," exclaimed his quondam associate. "I suppose you can guess what I was sent here for, Mr. Kearn? But I won't touch upon that subject, now the old heathen is either dead or dying, for when I quitted the room he hadn't many minutes to live. All his papers are contained in an iron chest."

"Of which you, doubtless, have the key," observed Carus.

"Not yet."

"I must speak with him."

"You will get nothing from him," said Styles, leading the way to the chamber; "he's past answering you, if he still lives."

On entering the room they saw that the dying man was at the point of death. Without the slightest pity or respect for the last struggles of humanity, the two ruffians shook him violently, and demanded where he had concealed his keys.

A deep groan was the only answer they obtained, and Carus, more ruthless even than his companion, proposed that they should search him.

With eager hands they dragged the faded, rusty, gaberdine from the still breathing body, and eagerly examined the pockets, but without success; the object of their search was not there; and it is impossible to say to what extent the outrage might have been carried, but for Styles, who caught sight of a silken cord round the neck of the drug-vendor. With a cry of joy at the discovery, he snatched at it with such force that it broke, leaving the keys in his hand.

"Mine at last," he muttered.

A sinister chuckle broke from the lips of the dying man. It was interrupted by a rattling in the throat, and all was over.

"Dead!" said Carus, in a tone of satisfaction.

"At last," added his companion, with a broad grin. "He lasted a plagny long time; but some people are so obstinate. It's extraordinary how the old fool clung to life."

With this observation Mr. Styles dismissed all recollection of his host from his mind, and proceeded at once to use the keys. It was some time, however, before he found the proper manner of applying them, for the locks were of a construction peculiar to the East. After several attempts he succeeded at last in raising the lid, when a slight detonating noise was heard, similar to the explosion of a percussion cap.

As no immediate consequences followed, he stooped over the chest and began eagerly to examine the contents, unconscious, while doing so, that a thin, grayish vapor was gradually issuing from it, enveloping his head. He had not breathed it long before its deadly effects became apparent. Asphixia, rapid as the lightning's flash, struck both heart and lungs: and, with a deep groan, he sank a corse beside the long-coveted treasure of his host.

Carus stood horror-struck. Not that he regretted the loss of his confederate; on the contrary, his death released him from an inconvenient witness of his crimes; but the suddenness of it overwhelmed him with terror. Several times he attempted to approach the spot; but the thin, subtile vapor still continued to issue from the iron receptacle, and warned him back; gradually, it filled the room—the supply seemed inexhaustible.

"There may be papers," muttered the guilty man, working himself up with desperate courage to make a last attempt. As he approached, the painful throbbing of his temples and the increased circulation of the blood became oppressive; it was death to venture near; the grim king of terrors guarded the old prisoner's treasure chest.

In the hope of dispersing the deadly mist, Carus opened the door of the chamber to admit a current of fresh air, but the fresh air only served to increase the volume of the vapor, which, strange to say, was unaccompanied by flame.

Unable any longer to resist its influence, he staggered into the corridor—even there it pursued him, forcing him to retreat step by step to the window through which he had obtained an entrance to the house; and he fled, cursing the cunning skill of the Hindoo, who had contrived to baffle all attempts to plunder him of his idol gold, living or dead.

The next day, the following announcement appeared in most of the principal papers:—

"Many of our city readers will recollect the old Indian, who, in his picturesque dress, was, until very lately, in the habit of vending his drugs in the neighborhood of the Mansion-house. The police at an early hour this morning were induced to enter his residence in Clerkenwell, in consequence of the neighbors complaining of an exceedingly offensive vapor coming from the back of the house. On entering the upper room, the officers discovered two bodies; the Hindoo dead in his bed, and that of the man, an Englishman it is believed, who resided with him. It would seem that the latter had met his death in plundering his employer, who, by a curious contrivance, had rendered any attempt to open the chest, an iron one, containing his wealth, fatal to those who did not possess the secret. The amount in gold and jewels discovered is stated to be considerable; but as the old man had no heirs, it will revert to the crown."

When Carus Kearn read these lines he bitterly cursed his own want of perseverance. Had he waited a few hours longer, the treasure might have been his. He had, however, one consolation: the only witness who could have proved his attempt upon the life of our hero, and the poisoning of Mrs. Bently, were removed from his path *forever*.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

THE MARTYR WIFE.

BY MARY C. VAUGHAN.

Oh, woman, oft misconstrued! the pure pearls
Lie all too deep, in thy heart's secret well,
For the unpausing and impatient hand
To win them forth. MRS. SIGOURNEY.

It was a wild, autumn night. The floods were aoroad, the rain poured pitilessly, and fell splashing in great pools through the roof that afforded scanty shelter, and the winds roared and wailed, by turns, as they pierced the chinks and crannies of the walls.

Ruth Holley sat alone in the dismal, desolate place that she called home, sat and listened to the noises of the storm, and strove, half-shudderingly, half-anxiously, to catch the sound of footsteps above them all.

Time had been when the footfall, for which she now listened, had been sweetest music to her ear. Then in a luxurious home, she sat, clad in costly garments, the face, so pallid and worn now, all dressed in smiles, and rosy with health and happiness, and listened to catch the familiar footfall, distinct to her love-attuned ear, above all the myriad sounds of the stony streets.

Oh, what a mighty change had two lustrums wrought in one so young, and fair, and happy!

Ruth Holley's home, now, was a poor wooden tenement on the outskirts of a great city. She lived on the upper floor of this wretched dwelling, and the sounds from below indicated the character of her neighbors. Voices speaking in the rich Milesian brogue, the cackling of fowls, and the squealing of "the pig," mingled together, rising up through the crevices of the loose floor. In pleasant evenings the sound of many voices, the swarming life of such wretched settlements, filled the irregular street. Now, to-night, only the voice of the storm was heard.

There were still some remnants of former luxurious living in that wretched place, a few cracked cups and plates of splendid china, stood upon a narrow row of shelves that occupied one side of the room, two or three remnants of costly carpets were spread upon the floor, and a miniature in ivory, without a case, or frame, hung upon the wall, the sweet calm face like Ruth's own, only without such deep sorrow-traces upon it, looking down upon her as she sat, with infinite pity in those blue, soft eyes. It was her dead mother's face.

Everything else that the room contained was poor and mean, from the broken chairs, to the unpainted deal table, and the wooden frame that served for a bedstead.

In the midst of this wreck of hope and fortune Ruth Holley sat. She was still young, for she could not have seen more than thirty years, though sorrow had left traces like those of age upon face and form.

She had known what joy was. She had been reared in luxury, sheltered from every wind of adversity, and ill-prepared, either by habit or temperament, too meet such a fate as hers had become.

She had married when scarcely passed childhood. Friends had approved, all the sanctions of parental choice and the world's approbation had been thrown around the marriage, religious rites had made it sacred, and the priest in solemn tones, had uttered the charge, "Those whom God hath joined together, let no man put asunder."

Often in aftertimes Ruth questioned of her own soul whether God had joined it to the soul of James Holley, soul all debased, and foully stained with rankest vices.

To-night, looking back over the years of her married life, she sought again an answer to her oft propounded query. She had borne insult, and abuse, and degradation. Her hopes had all been trampled out, her little ones had died wretchedly in want and without the alleviations of suffering that wealth can purchase, she had known depths of sorrow that were not to be described. But still a something in her heart told her that, having linked her fortunes to those of James Holley, she had made no bargain to be broken at will, but that, having given all lovingly, and of her own free choice, she could not take back the gift. In truth, a remnant of the old affection still clung round that ruin of splendid manhood, which James Holley had become.

Even now she remembered how once, in the early days of her love, he had been stricken down by fearful illness, and, for weeks, lay struggling feebly with the destroying power of disease. Then she had wildly prayed for his recovery, and had felt that to lay down her life for his, so beloved, would be but a slight sacrifice.

As she thought of that far-back time of sorrow, the tide of ancient feelings surged back upon her soul. She saw how much more she ought to do and dare to save his soul from the sickness of sin, from the hideous vice that festered, a moral disease, upon all the sources of his higher being. Suddenly, all the old affection seemed to flow back, and she felt that only too gladly would she lay down her life, if thereby he might be saved from death, and given time for repentance.

Heretofore she had hoarded her little strength, carefully, that she might toil for him, and keep a home, though poor, to which he might sometimes return. Perhaps she ought to have thrown off all allegiance to one who had so debased his nature, but she was a loving woman, and thought little of abstruse questions of political and social rights. To fulfill, as well as was possible, all the obvious duties of her hard fate, was her sole thought for herself. So, though feeble and worn by much suffering, she had worked to earn the pittance that might have made her comfortable alone, but served only to keep shelter and bread for her husband and tormentor.

Now a wild excitement siezed her. To serve him she would no longer hesitate to peril health or life. She rose up, wrapped herself in her worn shawl, a remnant, faded and time-stained, of the luxurious garniture of other days, and went out into the storm.

The wind beat and surged against her slight figure as she hurried along the street. The rain penetrated her thin garments, and they clung dripping to her form and impeded her progress. The night was black with darkness. At intervals the dim light of the lamps gleamed luridly through the falling rain, and swayed and flickered in the wind, and occasionly red lightnings flashed athwart the inky sky.

Unmindful of all these horrors, the woman sped on, threaded long and narrow streets, turned many corners, past splendid houses, where light, and music, and happy hearts mocked the gloom of the outer night, and the sorrowful commotion of her soul; passed churches whose spires pointed heavward, but whose doors one so humble as she had now become, might never dare to pass, in the poor garments of her station; past the glittering haunts of vice; past bar-rooms from whence a red glare burst forth, and the sound of fierce voices, lifted in oaths and imprecations, as the doors were thrown open to afford ingress or egress to the late revellers; past rows of magnificent warehouses, and poorer shops; past dwellings, gradually fading from the respectability of a modest, plain exterior, to the haunts of the poor and vicious, huddled into one indiscriminate heap of festering wretchedness; past all these, until she came to the low drinking cellar where she knew her husband might be found, among the vile associates to whose society he had debased himself.

When she reached the door, for the first time, her courage failed her. The sounds of revelry were loud in this haunt of infamy. Its vile frequenters were evidently holding their orgies in defiance, or forgetfulness of the storm. A drunken voice was roaring the old refrain "We won't go home till morning," and a chorus of oaths, yells, and all frightful noises, accompanied the song.

A tender, delicately-reared woman, well might her foot falter upon the threshold of that Pandemonium, in which the vilest of both sexes were gathered. Surely those were sights and sounds well calculated to appal her.

But she had not ventured into the storm for naught. She had come to take James Holley to the shelter of his own poor home, and even then, her purpose was not forgotten amidst her tremulous fears, and her failing courage.

She opened the half-door, at the foot of the steps, and went in.

A burst of strange yells and noises, fitted to the spot and hour, saluted her appearance. Her cheek, pale before, blenched to ghastly whiteness, but she did not falter. Walking straight to the table where her husband sat, his head resting on his clasped hands, in a sort of drunken stupor, she laid her hand upon his shoulder.

He started up, with an oath, and clenched his hand for a blow, but something in the look with which she regarded him restrained him—a look of mingled sorrow, and patience, and tender pity.

His hand relaxed, he fell back upon his seat, and doggedly regarded her. Scowlingly he asked:

"What do you want, woman? This is no place for you."

"I know it well," she replied, "but if it is not too vile for the man who vowed to protect, love and care for me, at the altar, surely it is not too vile for me. But come with me. We have yet a home, poor as it is. Come home, James, for the love of God, for the love you once bore me."

There was something in her look and voice that he could not resist. He rose up and followed her from the room. A shout of many voices, mingled in scorn, defiance, ridicule, rose from the brazen throats of that throng of wretches, as he went out. He turned upon the threshold and shook his clenched hand toward them.

Far out into the stormy night that shout followed the retreating pair. The shock of Ruth's presence, the heavy rain, and cold wind, had, together, conspired to sober James Holley. He did not, as might have been his wont, return to chastise his yelling tormentors, nor did he utter one word, either of harsh reproof, as she had feared, or of angry crimination. In unbroken silence he plodded beside her through the falling rain, and at last, seeing by the gleam from some window, as they passed, that she was ghastly pale and trembling, he even drew her arm within his own, surlily enough, but something, in the now unwonted attention, brought tears to her burning eyes, and warmed her sinking heart.

It was a long, dreary walk. Ruth had not now the stimulus of the high purpose that had sent her forth. Had she not leaned upon her husband's arm, she could scarcely have reached her home again.

They arrived, and she sank down, utterly wearied, upon the nearest chair. James fanned the smoldering embers, and even went out to buy a fresh store of fuel, a fagot to brighten the fire, and coals to feed it; and bread and meat, a most unwonted attention to household wants, on his part.

The man's heart had been touched, beneath all the thick crust of vile habit. If he was silent, it was the silence of shame, an awkward token of his penitence.

When he returned and saw his wife, still sitting where she had fallen, her eyes closed, and the faint breath only bespeaking life, something of his old tenderness returned. Gently he removed her wet, clinging garments, and replaced them with coarse, but dry ones. Tenderly he lifted her to the bed, and chafed her cold limbs, and offered her a warm draught, and food, while tears, that for long had not moistened his eyes, now rolled down the cheeks bloated and seamed by vice.

His loving care had come too late Ruth smiled faintly, but put aside, with feeble hand, the food he offered. Presently a fever flush succeeded her deathly coldness, a sharp cough convulsed her feeble frame, while her eyes gleamed with the fires of delirium.

All night the wretched man stood beside that bed of suffering, and listened to the ravings of Ruth's delirium. From her wild words he gathered the secret history of her years of suffering,—suffering inflicted upon her loving nature by himself, and endured so patiently that he had never dreamed how deep had been its pangs, in the early days of his transgression, and had long since ceased to care, as the fatal habits grew upon him.

All night, and for days and nights that followed, James Holley watched the suffering woman. But in vain, all in vain! Too late was the renewed tenderness, too late the anxious care.

A pauper coffin presently bore to a pauper grave the wasted form of her, whose only fault had been that she loved him too well—who died a martyr to her love, that she might save him.

And he was saved! Not in vain had been the sacrifice of that pure life. Upon her failing sense fell the sound of his voice, uttering the vows of repentance and reformation that were revowed beside her shrouded form.

Henceforth, James Holley stood a man among men. The influence of his long career of vice could never be wholly eradicated, but by steadfast perseverance, and strengthened by the memory of his martyr wife, he triumphed at last, and was again free from the bondage of his vice.

DARKNESS AND DAWN.

A ROMANTIC INCIDENT.

BY EMERSON BENNETT.

Some years ago, while making a brief sojourn in the city of Baltimore, I set out one evening with a friend for a stroll through the city. We had visited several places of interest, and were on our return to our hotel, when, in passing through a dark and narrow street, a female, closely muffled in a coarse shawl—which, thrown over her head, was drawn around her face, so as to conceal all but her eyes—hurriedly crossed over from the opposite side of the way, and accosted us in the accents of despair.

"Gentlemen, for the love of God, give me money! My mother is dying of hunger, and I have not wherewith to purchase a morsel of food!"

We were both struck with the tone of her voice, for though agitated by a feeling of desperation, it had a peculiar sweetness, and her language was that of one both educated and refined.

"Do not think me inquisitive," said my friend, in a kindly tone, as he drew forth his purse, "if I ask what misfortune has brought you to this? for it is clearly evident you are no common applicant for charity."

"Oh! no, sir—no!" she said, shrinking back into herself, as it were; "I never asked for charity before; and though I have not tasted food for two long days, I would sooner perish than ask it for myself now; but I could not see her die, my only friend—oh, God! I could not see her die!"

"Here!" said my companion, placing a sum in her hand which I immediately doubled.

She clutched the money like a miser, and for a moment or two was completely overpowered by her emotions. Then, with a choking effort, she gasped forth—

"Thanks, gentlemen! may God in Heaven bless you!"

She turned away, and took two or three hasty steps, and then stopping suddenly, she looked around, and added—

"You asked what misfortune brought me to this! I shall seem ungrateful if I refuse to tell."

"Never mind," said my friend; "the recital will give you pain, and therefore I pray you consider the question unasked."

"Your noble generosity overpowers me, sir!" she rejoined, in a tremulous voice, "and my pride shall give way. If you have a few minutes to spare, come with me and you shall know all."

"Nay," said I, "do not let us intrude upon your sorrows, unless you think we can be of further assistance. You are welcome to the little we have given, which should be doubled if we had more to spare, but we have no right to claim your secret in return."

She buried her face in her shawl, and burst into tears.

"Alas!" she sobbed, "if all mankind were thus generous, how many a miserable being might now be happy! Come with me, and hear my story! I know I can trust you, and I shall rest easier to know I have convinced you I am no impostor."

We assured her that we did not for a moment doubt of her being the victim of some terrible misfortune; but as we might be of further service to her, we would see her safely home, and she might then relate her story or not, as she should think proper.

"Follow me," she said, and set off at a quick walk down the street, we keeping a respectful distance behind, and I for one feeling an unusual curiosity to know something more of her.

At the next corner of the street was an oil lamp, which threw out a dim light; and standing near it, in a listless attitude, we observed a man in the garb of a sailor, and evidently just from sea. As our unknown guide drew near him, I noticed that she seemed much agitated; and on coming up to him, to our surprise, and apparently his, she stopped, and looked eagerly into his face for a moment; and then, with a wild cry, she suddenly threw out her arms, clasped him around the neck, and appeared to swoon upon his breast.

"See!" said my friend, making an abrupt halt; "we are duped—this is some trick—that girl is an impostor!"

"Impossible!" returned I, unwilling to believe that such grief and misery as she represented could be a base counterfeit. "Ha! see!"

As I spoke, the sailor, as if in deep surprise, partly unwound the arms of the unknown from his neck, raised her head, and looked, first curiously and then wildly, into her face, which we could see, even from where we stood, was pale and beautiful. The next moment he uttered a wild cry of surprise; and quickly throwing his arms around her now lifeless form, he exclaimed:

"My God! my God! Mary! my God!"

It seemed to be all that he could utter, as he fairly tottered with his fair burden, and for a few moments we stood dumb with amazement.

"What's this? what's the meaning of this?" he now demanded, looking fiercely at us.

"Well, if that is acting, it is the best I ever saw," muttered my companion, as we hastened forward and gave a hurried account of all that we knew of the matter.

"Great God! is it possible?" said the man, looking alternately at us and at the fair creature in his arms, and clasping his forehead as if to collect his scattered senses. "Mary!" he continued, at short intervals; "my wife! my dear wife! oh, my God: And my mother too! Starving!"

He continued to repeat these expressions like one overpowered by some terrible shock, and who knew not what he was saying; while we stood looking on, too much astonished to think of offering him any assistance.

At length, with a sort of gurgling gasp, the poor creature opened her eyes; and looking wildly and fondly into the manly face of him who supported her, she murmured:

"Charles! Charles! is this you? in life—in death—or in a dream?"

I pass over the wild, frantic, passionate exclamations on both sides, as each began to realize the truth—the one that he had found a loving wife in the depths of misery—the other that she had regained a fond husband at a moment of all others when she most needed his aid, counsel, love, and support.

"Come," whispered my friend, touching my arm, "let us withdraw; their meeting should be sacred from the intrusion of strangers."

Though deeply curious to know something of their history, I silently acquiesced in his proposal; and quietly departing, we returned to our hotel, musing upon the uncertainties, vicissitudes, and romance of life.

Two days after, as I was sitting on the piazza of the hotel, I saw the sailor passing along the street, and curiosity prompted me to address him. The moment he saw me, he came bounding up, grasped my hand, and burst into tears.

"God bless you!" he exclaimed, in a choking voice; "God bless you and your friend! and so says Mary. I've been hunting you all over the city, sir, but feared I'd never see you again. Here! let me pay you back your money; and will you be so kind, sir, as to accept these two rings for yourself and friend?"

I took the money—for I saw if I did not he would feel very much hurt; but fearing his circumstances might not justify him in making a present of so much value, I attempted to decline the rings. It was of no use—he would take no denial—and so I reluctantly accepted them, thanking him in behalf of my friend, who was absent. I then drew from him his story, which I will give in a few words.

He and his wife were both natives of a small village on the Chesapeake, and had often played together as children. His own father was then in good circumstances, but subsequently lost his property, and died soon after, leaving himself and mother to struggle along as best they might.

Among those believed to be friends in prosperity, but who forsook them in adversity, was the father of his present wife; but though change of fortune separated the youth and maiden, it only increased an attachment which had begun in childhood.

For years, however, they did not meet; and during that time the narrator became a sailor, and acquired sufficient means to purchase a cottage for his mother, leaving a small balance on mortgage, which his next voyage was to clear off. While at home, he and his Mary again met; and discovering a mutual passion, and knowing her parents would not consent to the union, but were most anxious to ally her to a wealthy suitor, they took advantage of opportunity, and were privately married.

Charles Delaine, for such was his name, then took leave of his wife, and shipped for a whaling voyage, intending it should be his last cruise. While absent, his wife's parents, discovering the secret of her marriage, disowned and drove her forth, and she took refuge with his mother.

Together the widowed mother and wife struggled along, both anxiously looking for the return of their only friend; but he came not at the time expected, the mortgage was foreclosed, the property sold, and, almost penniless, they repaired to Baltimore, hoping to be able to maintain themselves by the needle.

I need not prolong the story—it is an old tale. Sickness and misfortune followed them, they failed to procure sufficient work for their necessities, and on the night when the wife appealed to us, they were in a starving condition. Charles had just returned from his cruise; and at the very moment when his Mary so unexpectedly met him, he was thinking of home, which he expected to reach the next day. He had been prudent, the voyage had been more than usually profitable, and his share, he said, would enable him to start in business.

"Come what will," he concluded, "I'll never leave my dear mother and Mary again while we live. They're happy now, thank God! and it shall be the aim of my life to keep them so."

He urged me to come and see him and his now happy family, and bring my friend; and then invoking upon us the blessing of Heaven, he wrung my hand, and turned quickly away, to conceal the emotions he cared not to display.

"Ah! such is life, in this world of selfish and unselfish humanity," mused I, as I watched his retreating footsteps, till a turn in the street concealed him from my view. We never met again.

HOW ELEPHANTS CROSS BRIDGES.

When I lived in a country town in New England, about twelve years ago, (said a man of my acquaintance,) I had the charge of the bridges, and I told people the Old Bridge was not safe, for I had examined it. There was one spot that I pointed out in particular. They paid no attention to me. It was Hough's duty to repair it; and, when I found he would not do it, I took an axe and knocked down his toll-gate. He didn't like it; and said the bridge was strong enough for anything. Very soon afterwards, in good time for me, some men came along with wild beasts; and amongst them was an elephant; and it was wonderful to see the old fellow work it. I never saw anything like it in my life. When he came to the bridge, he stopped, and put one foot forward on the first planks, and pressed them, and then shoved a little this way and then that. Then he brought his weight gradually on to that foot, and put out the other, and did the same with that. So he went slowly on—mighty cautious, taking his time. He got on some distance, till he came to the very spot which I had told them was unsafe. There he stuck out his foot, and the planks shook. Then he drew it back, and began to swing his trunk a little. Then he raised his trunk, and gave a grunt and a kind of a squeal after it, three times over. "See that!" said his master. "Push him! Drive him," cried some of the bystanders—(I guess there were about fifty standing round). "Make him go!" said Hough. "Make him go?" repeated the showman. "I'll give you twenty-five dollars if you'll get him to cross this bridge. If I should attempt to force him over, I believe he would kill me. All these men couldn't get him across. Come," added he, addressing the sagacious brute, "I guess we'll go back!"

The elephant immediately turned round, and walked behind his master; and they went along up the bank of the river to the New Bridge—all the people going behind, to see what he would do. It was about a mile; and, when he got there, he began just as cautiously as before; but, after making a few experiments with his forefeet, he began to move on with some confidence, and, after a few more paces, took up his customary gait, and walked straight and safe across the bridge.

"There," said I, "Hough, he knows more than you do." It was a great triumph for me, I can tell you

T. D.

THE HOUR OF DEATH.

BY L. H——.

Leaves have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the North-wind's breath,
And stars to set—but all,
Thou hast *all* seasons for thine, oh, Death!

Day is for mortal care,
Eve for glad meetings round the joyous hearth,
Night for the dreams of sleep, the voice of prayer—
But all for thee, thou Mightiest of the Earth!

The banquet hath its hour,
Its feverish hour of mirth, and song, and wine;
There comes a day for Grief's o'erwhelming power,
A time for softer tears—but all are thine!

Youth and the opening rose
May look like things too glorious for decay,
And smile at thee!—but thou art not of those
That wait the ripen'd bloom to seize their prey!

Leaves have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the North-wind's breath,
And stars to set—but all,
Thou hast *all* seasons for thine own, oh, Death!

We know when moons shall wane,
When summer-birds from far shall cross the sea,
When autumn's hue shall tinge the golden grain—
But who shall teach us when to look for thee?

Is it when spring's first gale
Comes forth to whisper where the violets lie?
Is it when roses in our paths grow pale?
They have *one* season—*all* are ours to die!

Thou art where billows foam,
Thou art where music melts upon the air;
Thou art around us in our peaceful home,
And the world calls us forth—and thou art there!

Thou art where friend meets friend,
Beneath the shadow of the elm to rest;
Thou art where foe meets foe, and trumpets rend
The skies, and swords beat down the princely crest.

Leaves have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the North-wind's breath,
And stars to set—but all,
Thou hast *all* seasons for thine own, oh, Death!

AMY HARTLY;

OR,

A ROMANCE OF LIFE.

In the heart of London is a dark, obscure street, which leads from the narrow avenues and filthy purlieus of Drury Lane. High, old, ruinous tenements give it a peculiar aspect, whilst numberless cages of singing birds, and boxes of pigeons, darken the broken windows, whose ledges are filled, too, with pots of homely, old-fashioned flowers, which droop on from season to season, in that close, city air; like the human plants within, withering yet existing.

It was on a fine summer's evening that a stout, middle-aged man, dressed in an old suit of black, worn at the elbows, and glazed with grease and dirt, was proceeding up the street in question. He held by the hand a little girl, about ten years old, whose bright hazel eyes, auburn curls, and fresh, blooming complexion contrasted pleasantly with the hard, thin faces of children of the same age who, engaged in play, nearly filled the narrow street. The man entered a long, dark passage, and ascended a flight of stairs, closely followed by the child, whom he told to hold fast a small bundle he carried. They entered a large room, which stood half open, at the top of the landing. A woman raised her head on their entrance; she was gaunt and careworn, and though still young was bent nearly double from her employment, which was weaving horse-hair chains, on a small iron pin stuck in a cushion before her.

The man sat down, and wiped his face with his handkerchief.

"Well, John," said the woman, "is it true that they are both dead?"

"Aye—they were gone three days before I went. The fever has carried away half Evertham. William died first, and Annie an hour after."

"An' ye had to take the young un?" said the woman.

"Why, yes. I thought she'd be more use than to go to the workhouse. Not but folks offered to take Amy, for though they were only new-comers in the village it was said that every one liked them."

At the mention of her name the child raised her large, dark eyes, which looked heavy and swollen with weeping, and drew close to the man.

The woman, who was about to speak, stopped, and stared at her a moment.

"Did they leave anything after them?" she said.

"Well, William was not at work when he got the fever, but the minister gave me this pound for the child."

The woman clutched it eagerly, and secured it in her bosom.

"Supper is over," said she; "but there's some cheese left, an' I'll get ye a mug of beer an' some bread now."

The bread was brought, and Amy Hartly sat down with her uncle. She liked him better than the woman, for though she had never seen him before, and he had said little to her on the road, he was her father's brother, and was like him. So the child clung to him with the mysterious instinct of kindred.

When he was done he got up, and said he thought it was time for him to be off. Amy learned after that he was a scene-shifter in the theater, and worked at making artificial flies for angling during the day.

The child, who seemed too tired and sorrowful to eat, gazed around her. All was noise, bustle, and confusion. A variety of trades seemed carrying on in the room. She had been used to flowers and gardens, and a poor but quiet home, and all seemed very strange to her. In one corner a boy was teaching white mice to dance; beside him a poor cripple was making colored paper toys. Two men were seated on a small table making sailors' clothes. By-and-by a boy with a hand organ and a little blind girl with a parcel of baskets and wicker birdcages came in. This last was Amy's cousin Ruth; the small-pox had carried off her uncle's two other children the previous winter; this one was spared, but with the loss of sight.

"I hope, child, ye havn't brought the fever in yer clothes," said her aunt, as she pointed out her sleeping-place—a pallet stretched on the floor of a little cell-like passage, at one side of the room.

Amy said that all her clothes had been burned, and a kind lady had given her what she had on, and what was in the bundle.

"I thought they were over fine for poor folks' children," muttered the woman.

Amy's bed-fellow was Ruth. She was two years older than herself, but the child thought she was not as good as some blind people. She had known old Ralph, the carrier, who used often to give her a ride upon his donkey, Dobbin, and little Tina, that sang in the choir, and used to string necklaces of daisies for her. Ruth was sullen, and kicked her when she came near her in the bed. But little Amy was gentleness itself, and now the shadow of a great sorrow was too heavy on her heart too heed even unkindness. She knelt meekly down and said her evening prayer, as she was wont, then crept to the edge of the pallet, and worn out with fatigue, fell asleep.

The child was awakened at dawn by a confused noise and din of voices. Ruth was gone. She looked out and saw that the inmates of the apartment were already at work. She dressed herself quickly; but there was no water or any other appliance of the toilet to be seen, and Amy had been reared by parents who, though poor, were respectable in their habits and feelings.

She asked Ruth where she could get some water, and she was told at the pump in the yard. After a scanty breakfast she asked her aunt what she would do, and was answered gruffly to go and learn to make baskets or cages from Ruth, who was not going out that day. But the blind girl would give her little or no instruction, and laughed maliciously at each awkward attempt she made to shape the stiff osiers, which in her own supple fingers grew swiftly into graceful forms.

"I fear I can never make one," said the poor child, with a deep sigh, after the twentieth attempt. "Oh! I wish I had died, too, with dear father and mother," and she burst into a flood of tears.

Mrs. Hartly looked up from some chain that had become tangled, and called out, in an ill-tempered tone:

"Come, have done with that ere sniveling. I'll have none of it. What ails the girl? Can't she make a basket?"

"She's crying 'cause she ain't dead, like her father and mother."

The woman, though hardened by poverty and grief, was not hard-hearted, or she would not have let her husband go a long journey, when they heard the rumor of his brother's and sister-in-law's death, to take upon them another helpless burden. She remained silent a moment, then called Amy to her in a softer voice.

She came up to her, wiping the tears from her eyes, and stood trembling before her.

"Don't cry, Amy," said she, suspending her employment for a moment. "You will go to your father and mother one day. They say God has given poor folks a better share of the next world; if so, they will never be cold, or hungry, or want work any more. I had a mother once; but she died of cold and hunger when I was a young thing like you. I did not cry after her; but I worked on, ever since, until I am all skin and bone, as ye see."

The young girl looked up at that hollow-eyed, ghastly woman, and saw that she spoke truth. So she went back meekly, and took up her work again, but with a heavier weight upon her young heart than even grief for those loved ones had caused. But even then God smiled upon the orphan, and sent comfort to her. Ruth, who had been listening to her mother's words, now put her hand in hers, and whispered:

"I aint a-going to be bad to you. I'll teach you—so don't cry."

Amy's loving heart swelled. She bent over—for they were sitting on the ground—and kissed the blind girl's pale cheek. But she seemed little used to such demonstrations of love, for she pushed her away and laughed. But, nevertheless, she taught her, by some intuitive process, to make both a basket and a cage; and though she had ridiculed all her former attempts—such is the magic power of love and kindness, that she now straightened and bent the basket, and, giving it a few artistic touches, got up, and, guiding herself to her mother's chair, exhibited it as Amy's work.

"It ain't bad," said the woman; "but I hope ye did not lose much time in teaching her."

But instead of making them, Amy now sold the baskets and cages. This was a very successful move. The fresh, innocent face of the child, and the soft, humble expression of her beautiful eyes, interested the passers-by, and secured her customers.

One day she came in after having sold four cages and several baskets—an unwonted occurrence.

"The folks buy sooner from you than me," said Ruth, enviously.

Amy inherited from her own gentle mother what cannot be taught—forbearance, and she said—

"No, dear, it is because your work is so beautiful. One gentleman, when I told him that it was a blind girl did them all, gave me half a crown for you, and I have bought you such a lovely pot of mignonnette out of it."

Ruth looked sullen, then laughed—the old, malicious laugh, as she said—

"I don't care for flowers. What good are they to me, when I can't see them."

"But smell this, dear, how lovely it is."

Amy stooped down to where Ruth was sitting, and put the plant close to her face. The girl dropped her twigs, and smelt the delicious fragrance. She next felt the leaves and tiny blossoms, and smelt them again. A softer, sadder expression stole over her face. Even that trifling kindness awoke the sweet, benign spirit of humanity that lingers in the hardest heart; and the blind one, unused to ought but hard words and ceaseless toil, gradually changed into a new being.

The pot of mignonnette was carefully tended; and sometimes in the evenings Amy and Ruth, with their arms twined around each other's necks, would bend over to inhale its perfume. And another and another flower was added, and they blossomed well, though in that crowded street, so darkened by the black, overhanging roofs, as scarcely to admit more than a narrow strip of the bright, blue sky above.

One day there was a gentle tap at the door. Amy rose up to open it, for the invitation to enter seemed not to have been heard. A pale, delicate looking young lady, very plainly dressed, timidly entered the room. The toilers were singing; but they stopped when she entered the room, and Mrs. Hartly rose up and brought the lady a chair, but she sulkily resumed her seat, and muttered something about not wanting Methodist folk, when the stranger said that she had called with some tracts.

"People often want bread more than tracts," said Mrs. Hartly. "Besides, I can't read, and John's too tired when he comes home."

The young lady's pale cheek flushed; but at that moment the tailors came forward and asked for some. She opened a little basket and gave them a couple, with a smile of such sweetness, that Amy, who had been gazing wistfully at her, now glided up and said, in a low voice—

"I can read, ma'am."

"Can you, dear?" said the lady. "Then you can read for your mother."

"She's not my daughter. I have only that poor blind thing that's a making the baskets."

The young lady murmured, in a low, sweet voice, some compassionate expression. It won Mrs. Hartly, and she poured out her tale of woe.

The stranger looked earnestly into Amy's face, and said—

"So this is not your own child, you say?"

"No, ma'am. She is my husband's brother's. Her mother was a decent body, quite above the common, John says. She was companion to the minister's lady at Fairfield; but she took a fancy to William, and they got married, which so spited my lady—for she always wanted to keep her with her—that she turned every one against them. They both died of the typhus fever, which was going a couple of months ago."

"Poor child!" said the young lady, passing her hand caressingly over Amy's silken curls. "I will take this little girl to sew for me, and will pay her so much a week, so that she can assist you better, if you would like it."

The woman mused some moments at this proposal. Amy's keep, as she called it, was not much, and she was very useful. Ruth worked better beside her, the people bought readily from her, too. But, though a hard, worldly woman, she was not so bad, but she could feel what a world of good might accrue to the poor orphan by the change. The thought occurred, too, that it might be better for themselves. So she said that she would ask her husband.

John consented; and it *was* better for them all. Miss Warrington, the young lady, lived with her brother, a wealthy clerk in the East India Company's service; and by his interest John got a place as light porter, with a salary of a pound a week. Ruth had a taste for music, and Miss Warrington got her into the Institute for the Blind, the physician of which declared that the recovery of her sight was quite probable, when her constitution had sufficiently recovered from the effects of early and protracted toil, to permit an operation to be performed. Amy saw her, months after, looking fat and rosy, and better, gentler, and kinder, speaking with gratitude of her instructors, and "dear, blessed Amy," as she called her when she kissed her.

Mr. Warrington and his sister lived in a fine house—not in the fashionable part of London, but in a large back square, so quiet and still, that the people seemed always asleep in it.

Miss Warrington was an invalid. She did not complain or take medicine, but Amy Hartly, who learned to love her with all the warmth and devotion of her affectionate nature, soon became sensible that she was not strong like other people. She moved so gently and languidly through those beautiful rooms, and then Mr. Warrington asked her how she felt when he came in, and his voice was always soft and tender when he spoke to her. The servants, too, moved quieter when near her, and spoke of her as poor Miss Edith.

Sitting in that lovely room with those spacious windows, looking down on cool, green grass and large trees, that even in summer never looked dusty, the child's heart expanded with delight and happiness. Exquisitely susceptible of outward influence, her fine taste appropriated naturally all that was refined and elegant, and thoroughly enjoyed it, so much so that, at times, like a bird, she would forget herself, and burst into a glad snatch of some old song or psalm tune, then stop confused, or, flinging down her work, would fling her arms round Miss Warrington and kiss her again and again.

Amy learned to write, sing, and play, for Miss Warrington was one of those true Christians who would diffuse the priceless gift of knowledge even among the most lowly. A child of quick perceptions, she made rapid progress, unconsciously imitating even the refined language and elegant manners of her beautiful instructress.

Oh! how happy her days flitted by in the calm regularity of that household. Never tired, yet always busy, she worked in the little patch of garden, tended the geraniums, mended the house linen, and on set days, Mrs. Upton, the old Scotch housekeeper, instructed her in house duties. Mr. Warrington—a grave, earnest business man—came home to dinner precisely at four o'clock, except on Thursdays, when he dined at his club. Every summer they spent at Lakelands, Mr. Warrington's family seat, in Essex. Amy was fond of flowers, and she reveled here in a perfect paradise of a garden.

Five years had glided on. The promise of Amy's childhood had been fulfilled in a face and form of exceeding loveliness. Few ever beheld her without admiration, and strangers rarely passed her without turning again to look upon that faultless countenance. That the fair girl was unconscious of her beauty, we will not say; she loved all that was beautiful herself, and she said she was glad that she was pretty, because dear Miss Warrington would love her better.

But grief came at last. For some time Amy had perceived that some deep sorrow was slowly consuming the existence of this beloved friend. Her early life had made her prematurely thoughtful. She had seen Edith poring over letters and a miniature in tears. Woman's heart is early precocious in such matters, and, surmising the cause of that deep grief, pity, tenderness, and sympathy was added to her love. She who in her innocence she had always thought so happy, had been grieving f r some loved one all these long years.

The young lady had, indeed, long been fading. Interest in Amy had probably kept the feeble spark of life alive so long. Physicians came, and she was ordered to Italy. They went. But even the balmy breezes of that delightful land could not restore her, and she prayed to be taken back to her own home.

It was a soft, vernal evening in spring that Edith desired herself to be placed on a sofa beside the window. Glimpses of the blue waters of the lake that gave name to the grounds were visible through the trees. The birds were singing in the distant wood, and the rich, glorious light of the setting sun was bathing the landscape. Ellis Warrington had sat and watched beside her day and night with more than woman's tenderness, and now, convinced that all hope was gone, he knelt beside her, and in deep, tremulous tones read passages from that Holy Book whose meek precepts she had followed well. Amy sat with that thin hand clasped in hers, watching the gray, mysterious shadows that were slowly falling on that beloved face. Miss Warrington's eyes had been closed—she opened them suddenly. Her brother was reading the sublime description of the Holy City.

"Ellis, how strange," said she, with a sweet smile, "I dreamed last night that I was with Arthur in that glorious city. Come closer, Ellis," she murmured, in lower tones. "Brother, when I am gone, let your hands put this picture and letters in the coffin with me."

The strong, grave man bent down and kissed her again and again, while his blinding tears fell fast and heavy as rain-drops.

"Oh! how dark it is. Amy, gentle Amy—brother——"

The weeping but awe-struck child knelt down—but Edith Warrington was gone.

Two years had passed away. Mr. Warrington had gone to India to look after a fortune left to him there. Amy was still at Lakelands.

Miss Warrington had left her a sum sufficient to maintain her in humble competence; but though she still remained on from year to year, her position was an undefined one, and, now grown to womanhood, her innate delicacy shrunk from remaining even in that happy home, not having any actual duties to perform. It is true that Mrs. Upton said that she could not get along without her bonnie birdie, and that all the servants—a class not very partial to *proteges*—declared that they would not stay if she left them. And to crown all, Ellis Warrington himself, on his return from India, insisted on Amy's staying at Lakelands *as its mistress*, to which proposal she finally yielded her assent, and the following week the village bells sent forth a merry peal for the nuptials of Amy Hartly and Ellis Warrington.

C. B.

THE LITTLE PEOPLE.

The sayings and doings of children are, now and then, particularly edifying.

A little fellow of some three years had one day the fortune to meet with a negro boy. The white child had either never before seen or never paid any attention to the color of a negro. He therefore eyed little Ebony with long-continued interest and curiosity—scanning him from head to foot, and from foot to head again. At length he said, as if he had concluded that the shades of that dark passage had adhered to the stranger's skin:

"You live in *The Tunnel*, don't you?"

Another child—a hopeful little New Yorker, some two years and a half of age—had one day been in some manner insulted and offended by a goose. Sonny departed in secret but deep indignation, and meditating revenge. A gentleman, who had been watching the child, soon saw him come again from the house, carrying in the hand which he held before him, a shaving all nicely curled up, and looking to the eyes of a goose as much like something good to eat as it did like what it was. Behind him the vengeful babe carried a big stick. He marched up to the flock of geese, holding out the shaving, and calling to them. The unsuspicious waddlers crowded round—the enemy foremost and most eager. Bub held out his decoy—and, as the goose stretched its neck to receive it, he brought round his other hand, and hit the poor bird a blow which keeled it over completely stunned—a result whereat the young avenger exceedingly rejoiced. If *that* boy is "father of the man," what a case "the man" will be.

Nellie, a five year old young lady, had a baby brother, whose hair was of that color which parents and friends call auburn or golden, but which enemies pertinaciously stigmatize as *red*. One lovely evening, just as Miss Nell had been laid away for the night, the setting sun sent a stream of checkered light through the apple trees, and gloriously painted the chamber door. Some one exclaimed enthusiastically at the beauty of that farewell gleam.

"Yes, yes," cried Nellie, from among the bed clothes, "but 'tis only the reflection of *the baby's head* upon the door!"

Said a little fellow, whose mother had left him to pass all the years of childhood and youth without her cherishing, guiding, and enduring love,—"I wish that I could die, and go to my mother. I am her baby, and she wants to see me. She has been *standing by the gate ever since she died, looking at every baby that comes through to see if it is not me!*"

A. M.

TAME AND PET BEARS.

Pet Bears. They are very common in some of the new settlements in the west, and in some of the wild mountainous regions of Virginia and elsewhere, even where white inhabitants have long been. With the Indians, also, they are often great favorites, and have been so, from an unknown period. In some of the villages of the Six Nations, or Iroquois, of New York, they are treated as a kind of public property. There a pole may usually be seen, erected on open ground, for their use; on which they spend much of their time, as they are by nature fond not only of climbing, but also of staying at a hight above the ground, often for hours together. I speak now on hearsay, of the pet bears of the Indians. A friend who had resided among them in his childhood and youth, informed me that he had known numbers of those tame animals, but had never heard of any of them doing any harm. This he attributed to the good feeding and kind treatment which they received from their masters. The cause of their fondness for their poles it seems more difficult to account for; but he assured me that he had often known one of them remain, from choice, climbing to the cross-piece usually fastened to the top of each pole, during a severe wintry storm, until covered with a coat of ice, formed by the freezing of the sleet which fell upon it in a cold wind.

These accounts reminded me of the black bears I used to see in "The Garden of Plants" in Paris, where they are kept in large pits, twenty feet deep, or more, walled with hewn stone, and communicating with dens, to which they can retire, and where they may be confined with grated doors. In the midst of each pit was a tall pole, expressly for the use of the bears; and they were frequently seen climbing them, or resting upon their tops. Now and then, as I have since occasionally seen in the newspapers, careless spectators would fall into one of the pits; but I believe they have always been rescued by the keepers.

It has lately become fashionable to keep a pet bear or two at some of the hotels in the region of the White Mountains of New Hampshire; and two cubs, at the hotel on Winnipiseogee Lake have given the visitors much amusement.

HOW TO MAKE YOURSELF UNHAPPY.

Take a time when you feel uncommonly uncomfortable, and seat yourself by the window that overlooks your opposite neighbor, who has all his wants gratified, and something over. See them piling on the trunks for a summer campaign, or an enviable short journey; have a "realizing sense" of your inability just now to do so on account of pecuniary straits; obey his call to let the key to his domicile hang in your front entry; let your wife enter just in season to see them start, and inquire "how it is that everybody can go but you and I?" and ask you further, in a querulous tone, "why it is that the world is so unequally divided?" Now both of you pop your heads out of the window and wish said neighbor "a pleasant journey," with a pleasant smile, while within you are rankling with envy, and wish him anything but more comforts; then last of all, sit down to a poorly-cooked breakfast, washed down with muddy coffee or smoky tea, and my word for it, if that day you don't inquire the price of board, or cogitate deeply about a change in your business, I say if you *don't* have such thoughts that you cannot keep away, you are an odd sort of fellow, make the most we will of you.

THE LABORING MAN.—Mark the laboring man, who breakfasts at six, and then walks perhaps two or three miles to his work. He is full of health, and a stranger to doctors. Mark, on the other hand, your clerk, who takes tea and toast at eight, and goes to the store at nine. He is pale and effeminate, full of sarsaparilla and patent medicines, and all sorts of wish-wash.

OF HOPE.

Reader, did ever you hear a person say—"I don't hope for *anything* now. Time *was* when I was full of expectations of future good; but *now* I have learned better than to hope at all?"

Probably you have heard such assertions; possibly you have made them; but they are never *true*—no, *never*.

The heart is as a bee-hive, or a nest of innumerable birds, that *will* keep flying out and up. There is no power in the human mind that can entirely shut in these swarming bees, these restless birds. Here they go there they go, darting in all directions, in spite of every effort to restrain them. You may have been so many times disappointed—your confidence in earthly enjoyment may be so shattered that you resolve, in a sort of disconsolate self-defence, that you will never again hope for anything on earth. You sit down moodily, and con over in silence the lesson you wish to learn; but while you are telling yourself how utterly in vain it is to look for any good below, a new-fledged hope steps to the edge of your heart, and opens its wings to fly. You lay your hand heavily, perhaps angrily, upon its head, and push it back into obscurity; but lo! from some other opening out shoots another of your birds. You catch that one and cast it back. But now half a dozen of them are out, careering in all directions. In vain do you work to keep them quiet. From the smallest conceivable crack or loop-hole they are swarming out, and you may spend your life in catching them. You may clip their wings, you may cut them entirely off—but you *cannot* make them the stupid, dead things that you desire them to be. Their wings will grow again; or if they are killed outright, new birds will take their places, and be just as restless and willfull as the old ones were, perhaps more so. The race is immortal—there's no use trying to destroy it; and that person is self-deceived who says sincerely—"I have seen the hollowness and falsehood of life—I no longer hope." Earth is *the place* for hope. Heaven hath fruition; hell hath but despair.

G. H.

MORNING WALKS WITH CHILDREN.

They are more delightful at the time, more favorable opportunities for giving instruction, more agreeable to the recollection and more useful in their results, than all the luxuries, amusements and conveniences which can be purchased by the most abundant stores of wealth. The scenes of nature then present their fairest appearance, the powers and faculties of the soul and body are refreshed by rest, the cares and troubles of the previous day have been laid by or forgotten, by the interruption caused by the night, the mind is active, the feelings are tranquilized, the affections warm. How important that the parent or elder friend should be up and out early with the young, and mingle his smiles with the beauties of the morning,—the smiles of God, as it were, shining in the beauties of creation, which are displayed in their highest perfection, by the beams of the rising sun.

How little do you think what you lose, fathers, mothers, friends, older brothers and sisters, who spend your mornings in bed, and deny the little ones around you the rich banquet of pure and useful enjoyments, which the Almighty prepares without and around you, in the fine mornings of every successive season, expressly for the pleasure and benefit of you all!

And all will partake in the benefits, as well as in the enjoyments. These are not confined to the young. By no means. The *habit* of early rising is invaluable. Only those who have long practised it can well appreciate it, although we sometimes hear great admiration expressed of the beauties of a single morning, by a person who seldom enjoys them.

It has been declared, after long and careful enquiry into the habits of many persons who attained to extraordinary length of life, that they resembled each other in only one thing, and that was early rising.

FACTS IN THE HISTORY OF ELECTRICITY.

Sir William Watson first fired gunpowder with electricity, and first applied tin foil to both sides of a Leyden jar. The French and English Academies, about the same time, made very brilliant experiments with electricity. In 1747, Benjamin Franklin raised it to a science, by his well known discoveries. He formed plans to bring electricity from the clouds some time before he put them in practice. His first successful experiment for this purpose was performed thus: Having made a kite, he raised a short wire on its top, and attached a long one for a string; and, on the approach of a thunder storm, his son raised it in the air. To secure his hand from the electricity, he tied a short silken cord to the wire, which he held. He thus succeeded in charging a Leyden jar from the cloud.

Franklin's experiments were repeated in Europe, after they had been published. Professor Reichman, of St. Petersburgh, was killed, by drawing down a heavy charge of electricity into an iron bar, and incautiously bringing his head too near it, that is, within about the distance of a foot.

The Electro-magnet, by which the telegraphs are worked, was discovered in 1820, by Oersted. It is a curious, and unaccountable fact, that, while steel is rendered permanently a magnet by a charge of electricity, iron ceases to be a magnet as soon as the current of electricity is stopped passing through it. The magnetizing of steel and iron was also discovered by Crapo, Davys and Liebeck, at the same time as by Oersted, but without communication with him or with each other.

FAREWELL TO THE GROVES.

The summer came—it went—its tale is told. A few more days and I shall see my beautiful trees—my *friends*—no more. My friends, the trees! how I shall miss them; how I shall long to walk again under their still shade; how, amid the city's brick walls, I shall dream of the sweet aisles of these groves. What a mighty thing one's mind *must* be when in it can be carried temples, and cities, and forests, and floods; to say nothing of the men, women, and children, living and dead, that are always there. These groves shall go with me to the noisy town; and sometimes I will shut my eyes, and stop my ears, and go *in*, and stand, as now, under my glorious trees, and listen to the voice of nature, and smell the sweet breath of the pine, and the fresh odor of the earth, and *rest*. Every season has its own experiences, and to the one just past have been given some which it must ever be a joy to remember. Oh! ye trees, who opened your green arms over me as if ye loved me, *ye* have been witnesses of what is ever to remain cause for unspoken, yet most deep and abiding gratitude. Ye tall, dark pines, I have made ye my confidents, and my companions; and it is with *real sorrow* that I bid you farewell. With trees for one's protectors, and with the little creatures that peep and play in their shade to protect, one *need* not be very lonely, even if one have *little* human companionship; but, alas for the lonely heart that must beat between the walls, and bleed against the stones, of the hard city.

A. H.

MY BIRTH-SPOT.

BY GEORGE D. PRENTICE.

Years have passed by upon their shadowy wings,
Yet o'er this spot no change has come to tell
The noiseless flight of time. The far-off hills
Are still as blue, the wave as musical,
The wild rose blooms as fresh and fair, the winds
Breathe yet as freshly on my brow, the trees
Still cast as soft a shadow, and as sweet
The violet springs to woo the breath of Heaven
As in my years of infancy. I range
Where erst I sported by the leaping stream,
And the glad birds, as they remembered yet
And loved the stranger, chant the same sweet songs
I strayed to hear ere childhood's silken locks
Had darkened on my temples. Can it be
That the dark seal of time and change is set
Upon my brow! Each spot I loved still blooms
In beauty undecayed, I hear no sound
That tells the tale of years, and can it be
That I alone am faded! Were it not
That many a fearful tale of sin and woe
And strife and desolation has been graved
On memory's darkened scroll—oh, were it not
That passion's burning pathway has been traced
So deep, so fiercely vivid that my heart
Is withering yet beneath it, I could deem
That I were still a pure and sinless child
Just woken from a long, long dream of tears
To gaze again in infant recklessness
On earth and heaven and ocean, and again
To paint the future as a lovely throng
Of bright and glorious visions beckoning on
To the blue beauty of life's Eden-isles.

THE RUINED HOMESTEAD.

BY MARY W. STANLEY GIBSON.

The road from the village of Lenox winds and winds up the mountain till it crosses it, and descends, on the other side, through a forest of pines into the town of Warrington, where is an academy for young ladies and gentlemen—according to the somewhat advanced fashion of the brave New England States.

Just where the village road, of which I have been speaking, seemed to pause a moment to rest after its long ascent from Lenox, before it entered upon its equally long descent to Warrington, just there, on a kind of table-land which overlooked the two little towns, stood a large farm-house, shaded by grand old maples, and surrounded on three sides by a pretty flower-garden; while on the fourth a wicket-gate led out into the pastures, the orchard, the "mowing," and the woods. The great front door, which opened directly into the parlor, always stood open of a summer's day; and the traveler, checking his horse for a moment's breathing time upon the mountain's brow, might catch a glimpse, over the garden and the flowers, of pictures and a piano, and then turning in his saddle, look down the steep road, and see, at the bottom, a pond sparkling in the sunshine, and dotted over with ripples at the slightest stir of wind. It was a pretty little sheet of water; in the summer time, scores of white lilies swayed to and fro upon its breast, and languished at their own beauty as they saw it mirrored in the waves below. You could not see the pond from the door of the farm-house, but from its roof, which was flat, and balustraded, and easily gained by a flight of steps from the great garret.

Mr. Wellman, the owner of this pretty place, was a widower of sixty, and had but one child, a daughter named Margaret, who would, one day, inherit a snug little property. She was well educated, and could play and sing very sweetly. In short, everybody loved her; and she was kind and gentle, and did her best to please everybody. She was yet a school-girl, though her marriage with her cousin William was fully determined on, and studied her lessons in the intervals of love-making, and prepared her French exercises for her master after listening to William's plans for their bridal journey—like the good, little, simple girl she was. It was a quiet heart enough, and neither she nor any one else gave it credit, just then, for all the depth of passionate despair it brought up afterwards to the light.

William Wellman was the only son of the farmer's brother, a retired merchant in the town of Lenox, and like herself, a student of the Academy at Warrington. He liked Margaret very well, and thought it a fine thing to be engaged to the best girl in the school, who would bring him such a pleasant home and comfortable dowry, and who never had thwarted his royal will and pleasure in any one thing since he first knew her; but when her father's consent to the engagement had been given, and he felt that she was bound to him, love-making became rather a bore, and he was glad of any excuse which would enable him to escape from it. When Margaret went home for the autumn term, and left him behind, he did not shed many tears; on the contrary, he drew a long breath, and felt (and he had the grace to be ashamed of feeling) a half-acknowledged sense of relief at her absence.

Yet he was not a cold-hearted nor an unloving man. He could love passionately, and be true—that is, as true as it is in the nature of any man to be—only that his time had not yet come. It was coming fast, however, and Margaret had only gone away to make room for her successor.

There is a certain dusky gentleman who is supposed to be mixed up with the affairs of mortals, and who must, I think, have laughed in his sleeve when he sent Augusta Hepburn to the Academy of Warrington as a music teacher. Her life of twenty years had been passed in the city of New York, and the contrast between her appearance and that of the farmers' daughters she was to teach, was ludicrous in the extreme. She was of good birth and high family, though an orphan, and so reduced in her circumstances as to be glad to accept this post in a village school. She had been educated at a famous establishment in Troy, and thoroughly educated, too. She was a fine classical scholar, an artist, an authoress, and a poetess, danced like Taglioni, played and sang like an angel, and was a widow, her husband having died after an unhappy union of a year. It was not long before she became the preceptress of the Academy, and then William had an opportunity of seeing her every day of his life. Her tall, elegant figure, her deep mourning, the easy grace of her motions, and the dignity of her manners, had already moved him strangely, and when he saw her fairly, day after day, sitting by the preceptor at the head of the school, with her shawl and bonnet laid aside, and her small, white hands ungloved, he went mad about her at once. She was a brilliant, not a beautiful woman; but with her wondrous smile, her flashing eyes, her bewildering manners and perfect grace, she placed him where she had so often placed his betters—at her feet.

The dusky gentleman of whom I have already spoken, having his implements upon the ground, lost no time in using them. William and the young preceptress met often, and it needed no spoken words to tell her what the boy was feeling. His blushes, his sighs, the long, ardent glances of his handsome hazel eyes, told the story only too well; and smiling sometimes to herself, at this new proof of her fascination, she gave him some slight encouragement from time to time. She had walked with him, when the school and the teachers had their May party out on the hills. She had been elected Queen, and had kept him always near the throne. The farmers' daughters looked red and common, and hateful beside her; but she—oh she—deserved a crown of diamonds, and he should like to be the man to give it to her. Thus the boy raved, walking up and down his room at midnight, and thinking of her—only of her—while she was sleeping quietly, and would only have smiled at his rhapsodies, if she had known anything about them. He was only doing what a thousand men have done before him, and what more than a thousand will do after him, I am afraid—flinging himself at the feet of a woman who would lead him through a tempest of love and passion, and leave him, at last, with nothing to show for the faith, the truth, and the devotion he flung so recklessly away for her dear sake.

And all this time, what was pretty Margaret doing? Her father's house was but five miles away from Warrington, and there were kind friends in those days, as there are in these, who were only too happy to go and tell her of Master William's infatuation, which, by this time, was plainly to be seen. She was a good and a truthful and a loving woman, and at first she only laughed at these busy-bodies, and declared she did not believe it. But one rumor came after another, while William himself staid away, and Margaret's face grew thinner and paler; and she was fond of going up on the square roof of the house, and looking at the waters of the pond, sparkling in the moonbeams so far away, and thinking how delightful it would be to lie down there in the stillness among the sweet water lilies, and so let the grief and trouble pass away forever.

While these sad fancies were crowding most thickly upon her, her cousin came home for the autumn vacation. He was moody and silent, and said but little to her; and she, for her own part, avoided him. But one pleasant afternoon, something impelled her to speak out, and know the worst; and she went into the great parlor, where he was lying on the sofa, smoking his cigar, and thinking, I have no doubt, of his Augusta. He laid aside the cigar, and she sat down beside him, and began her hopeless task.

Hopeless—how hopeless—almost every woman must know. For all men—even the bravest and best and gentlest—are cowardly in their dealings with women, and will evade a downright inqury and question, if it is a possible thing to do so. It happened, therefore, that William, though quite as open and truthful as most of us may be, led his little cousin decidedly wrong, and gave her to understand, without telling an absolute falsehood, that she had been deceived, and he outraged by the reports she had heard—somewhat highly colored ones, we will own.

"People will talk about a woman like that," he cried out, in conclusion. "As she says herself, she can expect nothing else. You see she is so different to them, and so superior, and talented, and all that sort of thing, that they are envious of her, and run off to fill your ears with nonsense, Margaret. She is a widow, and she had a rascal of a husband; the best thing that can be said of him is that he died. We are very good friends, Margaret—that is all; and she is lonely, and needs a friend if she can get one. You would love her yourself if you knew her—but you never will, because you are jealous of her. Women are always jealous of each other."

Margaret was full of joy at what he had said, and only too eager to show that she too could have generous thoughts of her supposed rival.

"I am sure William I did not really believe it," she said with a gentle little sigh of thankfulness. "And as you say, she must be lonely, away from her home and friends. I have a very great mind to ask her here for the long vacation!"

"What!" said William, starting to his feet.

She repeated what she had said.

"Do you really mean it, Margaret?"

"Of course I do. Shall I?"

"Don't—don't ask me," said the young man, getting up and going away. "But it was a good thought and a kind one, my dear."

He would not urge her—he had not quite hardihood enough for that—but he went up and kissed her before he left the room. She was not the first woman who has known a Judas, and sold her happiness for a kiss. And so, as a matter of course, the letter to Mrs. Hepburn was written, and the lady, after a little surprise, and a few more entreaties, came to visit her. A bad man is bad enough, Heaven knows—but from a bad woman—Heaven preserve us! I think Augusta Hepburn was one. She had never committed any great or serious crime, it is true, but there was a vast deal of unscrupulous wickedness in the bottom of her heart, which bid fair to lead her into all kinds of mischief. A sense of decency however restrained her while she was the guest of her rival, and though she watched Margaret and William rather curiously when they were together, she would not attract him to her side, by a look or a gesture. Now and then, when they were left alone for a moment, their eyes met, and more was said than could have been uttered in words. For the depth and sincerity of the boy's devotion had touched Augusta's heart, and she loved him almost as much as she had loved another, at Margaret's age, and when she was a pure-hearted and happy girl.

Little Margaret, seeing nothing of the by-play which went on if her back was turned, thought little of charming serpents—or of anything except the noble behavior of her lover, and the many good qualities of her much-wronged friend, and was as happy as the day was long. Three weeks of the month had already passed—there were seven more happy days, and then the joys and sorrows of school began again for them and for her. They must make the most of their time while they were free, she said with a pleasant laugh, as she bade her friend good night at her chamber door, on the evening of the last Sunday but one.

It was in the Indian summer, and the sultry heat of the day seemed to have deepened into the night—for Margaret could scarcely sleep. The air was close and heavy as if a thunder storm were coming, and she had a dread of thunder. She tossed and turned for a time, and then went out of her own room and along the corridor to Augusta's door. She was going to beg for company during the storm.

She tapped lightly—once—twice—but no answer came, and opening the door, she went up to the bed. It had not been touched—Augusta was not there, and the poor child's first thought was one which drove the blood away from her cheek and then drove it hotly back again. The window was open, and the portico ran along that side of the house. She went and looked out, and though the night was very dark, she caught a glimpse of two figures sitting upon the little roof, and heard voices speaking.

She listened to catch a word, and heard her own name at once. It was William who was speaking, and she had never heard such tenderness in his voice before.

"Margaret? Oh why will you keep that name before me continually, my love. You know how I worship you, and how I hate her for standing between us as she does."

"And as she always will do," said the clear distinct tones of Mrs. Hepburn. He stamped his foot and ground his teeth in desperation.

"She shall not, Augusta. By Heaven, if you will but say you will be my wife, I will rid myself of her to-morrow!"

"And draw down the wrath of all these stupid people on my poor head. Thank you!"

"They never will dare to blame you, Augusta."

She laughed a little hard bitter laugh. "Then they will be vastly less courageous than they are now, William. There is not an ill thing happens to any old wretch within twenty miles that is not charged to my score. Oh, the women love me—they always do—nearly as well as I love them. But that cannot be helped."

"Ah, if you would only let me protect you!" sighed the boy. "No one should dare say one word against you then—or if they did, they should answer for it, with their heart's blood."

"Would you really do so much for me?"

"Try me, and see."

"No—no—I have no need," said the preceptress hastily. "These are not the days of Don Quixote, and you must ride no tilts against wind mills. But I like to think that you really do love me, my poor boy—though I dare say it would be far better for you if you did not."

"Why—when you love me—back again."

"Listen to me," said Augusta calmly. "We love each other with our whole hearts—do we not?"

"I loved you and only you from the first moment when I saw you!"

It was all true then, and he had lied to her, thought poor Margaret, above.

"You would sacrifice your lady-love, and I would give up my hopes of a name and a place in life—a better name and place than I have now, or than you can give me William. This is what we should do for love—but something must be done for prudence also. In the first place, you must marry Margaret."

He sprang to his feet with an oath.

"Are you mad, Augusta? I would not marry Margaret now if she had a queen's dowry. Do you think after knowing and loving you I could take such a pale, tame creature as that in your place! Never! I wish with all my heart she was dead, and in her grave, where I could hear of her no more!"

The pale girl clasped her hands and prayed with the tears streaming down her cheeks—

"Oh God, what have I done that he should hate me so! Oh God, forgive him—he does not mean it!"

The wretched Margaret had heard enough—this cruel blow crushed her to the very earth. She clasped her hands above her head and fled wildly away—praying no more either for them or for herself, but feeling that the heavens were darkened, and the face of God hidden from her sight.

"What is that!" said Augusta, starting up suddenly from her seat.

"What!"

"I saw—I am certain I saw—something white glide across the yard and go out into the road."

"There are no ghosts here Augusta."

"There it is again. Do you see it?"

"No. Where?"

They both bent forward and gazed into the gloom, but nothing stirred, except the wind that rustled through the trees with a moaning sound. A vivid flash of lightning shot across the sky, and a deafening thunder-bolt scared the guilty lovers so that they separated, and tossed all night upon their restless beds. William was the first to rise in the morning, and going down the stairs, found the great front door open and the rain beating into Margaret's favorite parlor. As he went out to close it, he saw the track of small feet in the soft ground. They led out into the road, and a dreadful fear shook him from head to foot. He rushed up into Margaret's chamber. It was empty.

"Margaret! Oh God forgive me!" he cried out, and ran to her father, who dressed himself hurriedly and went out to look for the lost girl, crying like a child. They did not have to search long. Close beside the great bed of water lilies in the pond, they saw her white dress, and the tangled leaves and roots were bearing her up though she was quite dead. At this sight William uttered a dreadful cry and sprang into the pond. He was the best swimmer in the town, yet when he reached her, he only flung one arm around her, and seemed about to sink.

"Keep up your heart William," shouted the farmer on the bank, who was too old to help him if he needed help. The boy looked round and smiled a strange smile—he was white as death and only waved his hand in answer to the old man's cries for help. Then kissing the pale lips of Margaret, he let himself sink down beneath the water lilies still holding her in his arms, and all was over before the farm servants reached the spot.

The old man, wild with grief, could never understand how his boy had failed to save himself, but when the tale was told to Augusta Hepburn, she turned white and burst into an awful passion of tears. She could understand the atonement which his remorse had prompted him to offer to his victim, and without looking at the bodies she left the village that day forever. She is living her old gay life, is the wife of a banker, and one of the leaders of fashion in New York—but not for all her diamonds would I have some of the memories that rankle in her breast.

They buried the lovers in one grave, in a little grove beside the pond. The village girls go with their lovers to gather water-lilies and talk about Margaret while the noonday sun is shining—but at night no one passes the lonely spot, and the little pond lies glittering in the moonbeams, like an ever open eye in the depths of the forests, bearing witness to God of the tragedy which broke the old farmer's heart, and made a deserted ruin of the house upon the hill.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

CANADIAN.—We are not at all surprised that the Canadians, in common with all other subjects of the British crown, should cherish sentiments of the most affectionate loyalty towards Queen Victoria, and it gives us much pleasure to be able to say that in this country she is regarded with general respect and esteem, for her many admirable qualities, and the noble example of royal virtue and domesticity which she has set the other crowned heads of Europe. In fact, we think we can safely and truly say that, with the single exception of Florence Nightingale, there is no other woman living for whom the majority of the American people entertain sentiments of equal regard with those they cherish towards Queen Victoria. So you may rest assured, whenever you see "flings" at her in American newspapers, that the discourteous remarks find no more favor on this side of the Atlantic, or on this side of the Niagara River, than on the other. So far as the LEDGER is concerned, we do not remember of its ever containing a line or a word that could be fairly interpreted as being personally disrespectful towards this illustrious lady. We of course discuss topics of world-wide interest from our democratic, republican, American point of view. We advocate human rights—the rights of the *people*—on the broadest basis, and the only kind of crowned heads we believe in, are such as are crowned with virtue and honor; yet still we recognize the right of every people to live under the sway of such rulers as they prefer, and would never intentionally wound the feelings of the subject of any government by speaking disrespectfully of what he regards as the center of allegiance and the symbol of loyalty.

A TIPPERARY BOY sends the following recipe for making bird lime, with which to catch birds, for which a correspondent asked us in the LEDGER of September 9th. Take of white glue six ounces, and add warm water enough to make it into a thick paste, first putting in but a small portion of water, and gradually adding thereto until the glue becomes of the proper consistency, which should be as thick as it can be made without impairing its adhesiveness, so that the bird may not escape after perching. A tame bird, in a cage, should be placed near the limed bush or trap, as a decoy. By this contrivance, our correspondent says he has caught many a bird.

YOUNG HOUSEKEEPERS.—Keep an accurate account of every cent you expend, and what you spend it for, for six months, and you will be able to "tell where the money goes," and what it goes for, and will be prepared to make the necessary economic reforms. You would no doubt be astonished, on looking over such an account, at the number of cents, dimes, and even dollars, that had been unnecessarily and injudiciously expended. There is nothing like a record in black and white to tell a straight story, and open one's eyes in regard to such a matter.

Y. Y.—We are not surprised at your having brought down the indignation of the community in which you reside upon your head by such an injudicious attack upon the character of Washington in your lectures. In the first place, your declarations adverse to his reputation are false, and are founded upon mere partisan gossip and misrepresentations; and in the next place, were they true, the people would not permit you to blazon them forth with impunity.

A. L.—If you are intimate with the young lady, you can, from time to time, send her a supply of stamps with which to prepay the postage on your letters. If you are not very well acquainted with her, you might send her a stamped envelope addressed to yourself, in each letter that you write, on the plea that, as you are constantly traveling from place to place, unless the letters be carefully addressed, they will will not reach you.

SIR WILTON.—We should never advise any man to *avenge* himself upon a lady for a real or fancied wrong or insult. You might with propriety *prove your innocence* of the charges made against you, and demand of the lady a retraction of, and reparation for, the slander; but any attempt to wreak your vengeance upon her would be not only improper but injudicious.

M. J. C.—We think that your wife is right on the tea-kettle question. Water should boil before it is poured on tea or coffee "to draw." It is a common custom to put coffee in water cold, and then boil it, but it would be better to pour the water on the coffee boiling hot, and let it stand. This, of course, takes more coffee, but the beverage is far better than when it has been boiled.

STARS AND STRIPES.—In the LEDGER of March 14th, 1857, (which you can obtain of us or order through any newsdealer,) you will find a communication from the then Secretary of the Navy, in which he fully states what qualifications, &c., are necessary in applicants for admission to the Naval Academy at Annapolis.

ETELLA.—As long as you have doubts in regard to your love for the gentleman who is wooing you, it would be well to postpone the decision which he and your friends are so anxious to bring you to. At the same time you must not be unreasonable, and allow mere whims so to becloud your judgment, as to render a just decision impossible.

A LOVER OF JUSTICE.—Your husband cannot deprive you by will of your dower or right of dower in all or any of his real estate. It would be unjust to the children for him to give you the entire property as long as you shall remain unmarried. He should distribute the property equitably, and say nothing about your future course as to wedlock.

ABEL.—There have been many stories about the finding of the remains of the Ark and of the Tower of Babel, but on investigation they have all turned out to be false. The man who offered to sell you a cane made out of a piece of the Ark did not lack for impudence, if he did for cash.

YORK.—If you are satisfied that the young lady loves you, do not allow her refusal of your heart and hand to discourage you. Return to the attack, gently but persistently. She will tell you what the matter is, if you do not teaze her to do so.

S. H. K.—You should have paid for the daguerreotype at the time the young lady received it, but it is not too late to pay for it now.

JEPTHA.—Your account of the "dying heathen" is a very fair story, and, if true, it shows that a pagan can meet death with stoical indifference. But it has no sublimity about it. In fact, there can be nothing sublime in the death of a human being when God is not acknowledged. During a dreadful storm at sea, which wrecked a ship, and while the passengers were floating about in boats and on pieces of the wreck, a young man who was clinging, exhausted, to a spar, in a clear, manly voice, sang—

"Jesus, Saviour of my soul
Let me to thy bosom fly,
While the nearer waters roll,
While the tempest still draws nigh.
Hide me, oh, my Saviour hide,
Till the storms of life be past;
Safe into the haven guide—
Oh, receive my soul at last."

As the last words quavered upon the air, the singer sank beneath the wave, but left a holy calm in the heart of each tempest-tossed castaway who had been within the sound of his voice. That death we consider sublime, and can never meditate upon it without having our heart stirred to its most secret depths.

ESFIELD.—We do not consider the manager of the Academy of Music, or any of his employes, of sufficient consequence to know anything about them. There are no reliable fortune-tellers in New York or elsewhere; they are all cheats. We are not aware that any ill-luck is attendant upon the receipt of a lock of hair as a gift, but a person who is so ignorant as to believe in such omens is not apt to have much good luck. A man who has a wife in one State cannot lawfully marry again in another State, without first getting a divorce from her. A man who has deserted his wife cannot obtain a divorce from her except by some system of trickery, which can be exposed, and the proceedings whereby the divorce was obtained, and the decree of divorce, be set aside and declared void. In some States, a wife can get a divorce from her husband for desertion, after he has absented himself and failed to contribute aught to her support for a specified time, which time varies in different States.

JOSEPHINE.—A glacier is a field of ice. The most noted ones are among the Alps. If you can imagine a river flowing down a mountain and suddenly frozen fast, from the surface to the bottom, you can form a pretty fair idea of a glacier. Your study of drawing and botany can be made very profitable, the first as a useful art, and the second as a refined and healthful recreation. Mathematics will not hurt you. A woman cannot know too much—unless she unfortunately marries a stupid and jealous man, who will resent superior knowledge on her part as a personal affront to himself.

FAIR-PLAY.—We advocate the inviolability of the Sabbath because we believe in that doctrine. We believe in the good old Bible doctrine on that subject; and we are also convinced that as a mere matter of political and social economy, of health and worldly prosperity and happiness, the strict observance of the Sabbath is of the utmost importance. All your so-called arguments in favor of making the Sabbath a day of amusement and revelry are the mere utterances of selfish and beastly appetites, which, if you give them sway, will soon sink you to the gutter and keep you there.

A COUNTRY NEWS AGENT.—You can buy the LEDGER in small quantities from any wholesale dealer in this city, at 2 3-4 cents a copy. You can have them forwarded to your residence in Kentucky, or to any part of any other State, by mail, at a cost of half a cent a copy, so that you can procure your LEDGERS and pay the postage at a total cost of 3 1-4 cents a copy. You should charge five cents for them when you have to pay half a cent for postage.

J. L.—You can easily make an arrangement with the teacher of your children to let them come home at noon—that is, if you send them to a private school. The public schools have to be conducted on a rigid system, owing to the immense number of pupils attending them, which may render such an arrangement in regard to your children impossible. Three hours a day is long enough for such little things to be kept in school.

TOMPKINS SQUARE.—Your landlord cannot turn you out of the house without giving you notice; and if you are sharp, or have a sharp attorney, you can gain ample time in which to hunt up another dwelling—say from four days to a month. We have known an ugly tenant baffle a stupid landlord's attempts to dispossess him for over three months. Our advice to you is, to pay your rent and do everything that justice demands.

C. M.—It is useless to contend with the prejudices of a rival in love. You can never make *him* believe in your honesty and worth. Go ahead without regard to his machinations. He can never harm you so long as your own conduct is free from blame. Falsehood and detraction may have their influence for a time, but unswerving rectitude will prove too much for them in the end.

Z. P. G.—Many correspondents agree in estimating the present worth of a note for one thousand dollars due thirty years hence, (interest being reckoned at six per cent.) at $357,143. One correspondent, who seems to ignore arithmetical rules altogether, and to consult only his own immediate necessities for cash, says that had he such a note, he would sell it for ten dollars in gold or city bills.

LITIGANT.—You may succeed in having the conveyance of the houses and lots from the husband to his brother-in-law, and thence to his wife, set aside; but as they probably made the conveyances, and acted throughout, under the advice of good counsel, you will probably find the suit a long and tedious one, and may arrive at a barren result at last. All you can do is to consult a good lawyer and follow his advice.

ALEXANDER says his sweetheart persists in wearing her hair cut short like a boy's, notwithstanding his own and her parents' earnest expostulations, and he wants to know if he would be justified in breaking off the engagement therefor. You and the young lady are evidently unfitted for each other, and it would, no doubt, be best for both parties to have the engagement broken off.

UNCLE SAM.—It is impossible for us to say why your letters are not properly carried through the mails. You must make inquiry of the post-masters along the route between you and your lady-love. Perhaps some rival is a clerk in one of the post-offices and intercepts the tender and glowing missives; or perhaps the girl's papa could give you some useful information on the subject.

ASPIRANT.—Your ambition is commendable, but your verses are not. You should study grammar and rhetoric attentively before again "attempting poetry" or anything else for publication. You say you cannot find *inuendo* in any dictionary, not even "Webster's Unabridged." Very likely; but if you will look for *innuendo* you will probably be more successful.

S. S. S.—We cannot describe the ravages of the army-worm and the ball-worm among the growing crops of cotton. Perhaps some of our southern subscribers, who are familiar with the subject, will send us a statement in regard to it. The back numbers of the LEDGER, from the commencement of the story of "KARMEL THE SCOUT," will cost $3,40.

A PUBLIC-SCHOOL BOY submits the following problem for the arithmetical readers of the LEDGER. A huntsman discovered a panther in the crotch of a tree, at a distance of forty feet from the ground, the hunter being thirty feet from the base of the tree. He fired, and shot the panther through the head: how far was he from the animal when he fired?

B. N.—You can very well afford to wait a couple of years, or even longer, before marrying, as you and your intended are so young, and by that time the young lady's mother will have had an opportunity to find out what an admirable fellow you are, and will probably cease to oppose your union with her daughter.

RAMBLER.—You should beware of all the advertisers who promise to send you receipts for making all sorts or any sort of valuable compounds "on receipt of one dollar," or any other sum. We know nothing about the parties to whom you refer.

O. C.—It is useless to fret and rail at a rich old nabob, who is as obstinate as a mule and as deaf as a post. You should take things more coolly. Keep away from the old fellow altogether, and let his daughter manage him.

STATEN ISLAND.—You should pay the postage on letters you send to your brother-in-law, although he is a post-master. Those which he sends to you, marked "free," you ought to receive free of postage.

A LEDGERITE.—We do not discuss in our columns the merits of our contributors. Their writings speak for themselves. There has never been any book written in reply to the one you mention, that we know of.

A. P.—We always send a complete set of papers from the date of the subscription. A Postmaster has a right to remove the wrapper from a paper or book, but not to read or use the book or paper.

J. T.—We do not know what the "At Home" meant on the wedding cards you mention; but on wedding cards in general it means that the new-married pair are ready to receive calls.

E. P.—You should have known better than to have gone in swimming at this season of the year. The fever and ague is sometimes a most obstinate disease.

G. W. T.—You can get back numbers of the LEDGER from June 7th, 1856. The cost of the numbers from that date to September 4th, 1858, will be $4 56.

SALTPETRE.—You had better decline the challenge. It is a State's Prison offense in New York, either to send or accept a challenge.

IRENE.—We could advise you better if we knew what your business is, and what your education and social position are.

B. K.—From all we have read on the subject, we should advice you and your friends not to go to Frazer river.

LABORING MAN.—Have the tooth which troubles you so much pulled out. That is the only sure remedy.

*** *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*